

TAB

**GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES**

DISPOSITION OF FEDERAL RECORDS

**How to develop an EFFECTIVE PROGRAM
for the preservation and the disposal of
FEDERAL RECORDS**

Washington, D. C. • 1949

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GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION,
Washington, D. C., October 1, 1949.

Under Public Law 152, Eighty-first Congress, approved June 30, 1949, the General Services Administration is authorized "to promote, in cooperation with the executive agencies, improved records management practices and controls in such agencies, including the . . . disposition of records not needed by such agencies for their current use." This manual, the first of a series to be issued, covers an important part of the field of records management. It is designed to help agencies to develop effective programs for the disposition of their records, and it shows how this can be done cooperatively with the General Services Administration.

JESS LARSON,
Administrator.

Foreword

The management of the records of the Federal Government is an important problem. It is important because—

- ★ records constitute the basic administrative tools by means of which the work of the Government is accomplished,
- ★ records contain evidence of financial and legal commitments that must be preserved to protect the Government,
- ★ records embody information necessary to protect the civic, legal, and property rights of private citizens,
- ★ records represent an imposing fund of the recorded experience of the Government that is needed to give continuity and consistency to its actions, to make policy determinations, and to handle organizational and procedural as well as social and economic problems, and
- ★ records contain informational data basic to researches in a wide variety of subject-matter fields by specialists in scholarly disciplines and technical fields.

The problem of managing Federal records is difficult because—

- ★ they are very large in volume,
- ★ they accumulate rapidly,
- ★ their uses for current administrative, legal, and fiscal purposes require careful consideration,
- ★ their unnecessary retention in offices hampers operational efficiency and their retention for unnecessarily long periods involves high maintenance costs, and
- ★ their ultimate values for research and other purposes are hard to determine.

The most important element in solving the problem is that of making the proper disposition of Federal records at the proper time. They should be maintained at the place in which they can be used to best advantage. While they serve the primary administrative, legal, and fiscal purposes for which they were created and accumulated, they should be retained in the offices of Government agencies. When these primary uses have been exhausted or partially exhausted, however, records should be disposed of or scheduled for disposal at specified periods, or, if temporary values are attached to them, they should be removed to intermediate depositories, or, if they have enduring values other than administrative, fiscal, and legal ones, they should be transferred to an archival agency. In a word, systematic and expeditious disposition should be made of them.

To assist Federal agencies in the disposition of their records, the National Archives has prepared this manual. It was written by Theodore R. Schellenberg, Program Adviser of the National Archives, and it supersedes *How to Dispose of Records* (revised 1946). In it will be found guidance on—

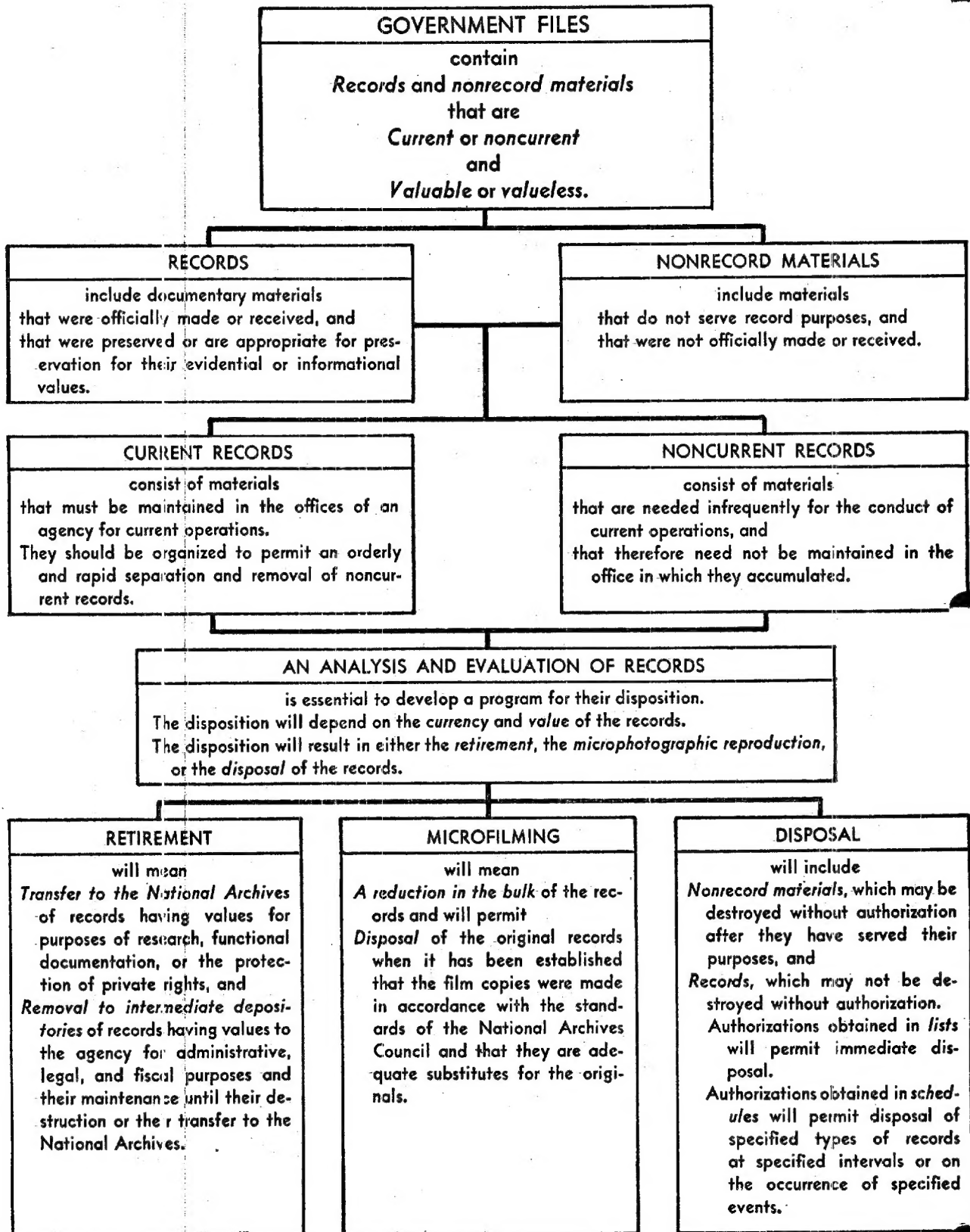
- ★ how to evaluate records to determine the disposition to be made of them,
- ★ how to obtain information about records that is basic to planning their disposition,
- ★ how to retire records by removing them to an intermediate depository or transferring them to the National Archives,
- ★ how to reduce the bulk of records by the microphotographic process, and
- ★ how to dispose of records.

Further assistance may be obtained from the records divisions of the National Archives.

WAYNE C. GROVER,
Archivist of the United States.

June 20, 1949.

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DISPOSITION TO BE MADE OF GOVERNMENT RECORDS



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Chapter 1

A DISPOSITION PROGRAM

Objective

The primary objective of a disposition program is to control the outflow of records from an agency as methodically as their inflow is controlled, thereby systematizing the management of records from their beginning to their end. Since Federal records are large in volume and accumulate at a very rapid rate, planned programs for their disposition are essential in the interest of economy and efficiency. Under such programs records that have to be retained temporarily should be retired periodically either to inactive files or to records depositories, and, after their current usefulness has been exhausted, they should be destroyed periodically; while records that have to be retained permanently should be held in an orderly manner within the agency that created them until they have become noncurrent and then should be transferred periodically to an archival agency. The programs should thus establish a standard, uniform, and considered policy for the retention, transfer, and disposal of records.

One phase of such programs is the selective preservation of permanently valuable records, reduced to the minimum consistent with the public interest. This process of selective preservation is a cooperative undertaking by the agency and the National Archives. The general standards for the selection of records are defined in chapter 3 of this manual, *What Values Do Records Have?* Agency officials can and should identify the records that are needed as evidence of the "organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations, or other activities of the Government." The methods by which this should be done are suggested in chapter 4, *How Should Records Be Analyzed?*

The National Archives staff also is vitally concerned in this selective process. In both its disposal and accessioning work the National Archives staff must identify the bodies of records in an agency that have permanent value. In appraising items on a disposal list or schedule, dependable judgments cannot be made as to what should be destroyed without knowing what is retained. Similarly in accessioning work, dependable judgments on the value of a given body

of records offered for transfer cannot be made without knowing their significance to the over-all documentation of the agency. The National Archives staff therefore can make an important contribution to agency programs of records disposition by helping identify the records produced by the agency that have permanent value.

This identification, however, is not enough. It is necessary that such records be marked for retention and that means be provided for their physical segregation from records of only temporary value and for their systematic transfer to the National Archives. Only through a periodic and systematic segregation of the useless materials can the permanently valuable records be brought under control.

Another phase of disposition programs is the expeditious and systematic removal and disposal of temporarily valuable records, including their reduction to the minimum consistent with the operating needs of Government agencies. The most effective method of dealing with records that will become useless is to prepare a schedule for their disposal. A schedule requires an advance determination of the life expectancy of each type of record. It is simply a written plan of policy and procedure for the eventual disposal of records made on the basis of a systematic analysis of the materials produced by an agency. A schedule thus specifies the types of records to be disposed of and fixes the minimum retention periods for each type. If these retention periods are long, the removal of the records to an intermediate depository is indicated. Schedules thus provide for regularity in the removal and disposal of useless papers from current records series. If they are prepared carefully, they will guard the agency against premature destruction as well as against indiscriminate retention.

Development

In order to establish a systematic program of records disposition, the following steps will generally have to be taken within an agency:

APPOINT A RECORDS OFFICER. A person should be chosen to handle the program who has a knowledge of the organization and functions of the agency and

an understanding of the relationships of records of various administrative units. In addition, he should know or obtain a knowledge of the best techniques and the basic procedures for the organization, maintenance, and disposal of records.

ADOPT A PLAN OF ACTION. A plan of action with major outlines of work to be accomplished should be made. The records officer will need to have information on the volume and location of every current and noncurrent records series in the agency, the character and use of housekeeping and operational records, and the use of the different records series at various levels in the organization. If he has such information he is in a position to start a disposition program immediately. If this information is not available, he should plan at once to make an analysis of the records of his agency.

MAKE THE PROGRAM OFFICIAL. The program should be made official through an authoritative directive from the top management of the agency. The success of the program may depend upon the support it receives from the head of the agency. The authority and responsibility of the records officer should be clearly defined and every effort should be made to enforce the program.

TRAIN PERSONNEL. The records officer should inform the personnel working on the program of the objectives to be attained. He should give them detailed and applied instructions in the techniques and procedures for analyzing, disposing, and retiring records. Brief manuals and illustrative guides should be prepared when such training tools are necessary. A selective bibliography of manuals issued by various Government agencies is provided in appendix I.

GET COOPERATION. Records management must be a cooperative job. It is therefore essential that the records officer should be able to use the knowledge that various employees have of the records and their uses. Close contacts with responsible officials and file supervisors in every administrative unit and their appreciation of the objectives of the program are essential.

Laws and regulations

In developing a records disposition program, the

records officer must give due regard to all applicable laws, Executive orders, and regulations. These include acts of Congress and Executive orders applicable to the removal and disposal of governmental records generally and those specifically applicable to his agency. They include regulations of Federal agencies that have specific responsibilities in regard to records of other agencies.

Provisions generally applicable to the removal and disposal of governmental records are in the National Archives Act of June 19, 1934, as amended (48 Stat. 1122; 49 Stat. 1821; 62 Stat. 58, 344, 1026) and the regulations of the National Archives Council issued pursuant thereto on November 9, 1944; the Records Disposal Act of July 7, 1943, as amended (57 Stat. 380; 59 Stat. 434) and the regulations of the National Archives Council issued pursuant thereto on July 29, 1949; and Executive Order 9784, dated September 25, 1946. These basic documents are reproduced in appendix II.

The United States Criminal Code, moreover, attaches severe penalties to the willful and unlawful destruction, damage, or alienation of any Federal records. Sections 234 and 235 of title 18 of the *United States Code*, which bear upon this point, read as follows:

234. *Destroying public records.* Whoever shall willfully and unlawfully conceal, remove, mutilate, obliterate, or destroy, or attempt to conceal, remove, mutilate, obliterate, or destroy, or, with intent to conceal, remove, mutilate, obliterate, destroy, or steal, shall take and carry away any record, proceeding, map, book, paper, document, or other thing, filed or deposited with any clerk or officer of any court of the United States, or in any public office, or with any judicial or public officer of the United States, shall be fined not more than \$2,000, or imprisoned not more than three years, or both.

235. *Destroying records by officer in charge.* Whoever, having the custody of any record, proceeding, map, book, document, paper, or other thing specified in section 234 of this title, shall willfully and unlawfully conceal, remove, mutilate, obliterate, falsify, or destroy any such record, proceeding, map, book, document, paper, or thing, shall be fined not more than \$2,000, or imprisoned not more than three years, or both; and shall moreover forfeit his office and be forever afterward disqualified from holding any office under the Government of the United States.

Chapter 2

WHAT ARE RECORDS?

Legal definition

RECORDS. The word "records," as defined in the Records Disposal Act of July 7, 1943, as amended, includes—

all books, papers, maps, photographs, or other documentary materials, regardless of physical form or characteristics, made or received by any agency of the United States Government in pursuance of Federal law or in connection with the transaction of public business and preserved or appropriate for preservation by that agency or its legitimate successor as evidence of the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations, or other activities of the Government or because of the informational value of data contained therein.

NONRECORD MATERIALS. The Disposal Act also states:

Library and museum material made or acquired and preserved solely for reference or exhibition purposes, extra copies of documents preserved only for convenience of reference, and stocks of publications and of processed documents are not included within the definition of the word "records" as used in this act.

Interpretation of legal definition

RECORDS. The definition of "records" in the Disposal Act indicates the elements that are or are not essential in materials to make them public "records." It is to be observed that physical form is *not* one of these essential elements. Records may have various forms. They may be books, papers, maps, photographs, or other documentary materials. It is also to be noted that the elements that *are essential* in determining whether materials are or are not "records" are stated in two alternatives. The first pertains to the production or acquisition of the materials, while the second pertains to their preservation or their appropriateness for preservation. The materials—

- ★ may be *either made or received* by an agency of the Government *either* in pursuance of Federal law *or* in connection with the transaction of public business, and
- ★ may be *either preserved or* be appropriate for preservation *either* for evidentiary purposes *or* for their informational values.

To constitute "records" the materials need not have all these elements, but they must have one of each of the alternative elements.

The elements pertaining to the preservation of records or to their appropriateness for preservation are deserving of further explanation. The *evidence* contained in the materials is stated to be an element that determines their "record" character. This evidence, according to the definition in the law, may pertain to the "organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations, or other activities" of a Government agency. Evidence on these matters would encompass practically all materials produced by an agency. Decisions therefore must be made as to which materials contain evidence that shall be preserved or is appropriate for preservation. The *informational* value of materials is also an element that determines their "record" character. The data in them may have an informational value for a variety of purposes, such as for researches and for the protection of the civic, legal, and property rights of citizens. Decisions again must be made as to which materials have informational values that make them appropriate for preservation. To help make these decisions a chapter on What Values Do Records Have? is included in this manual.

NONRECORD MATERIALS. This is a designation for materials that are not included within the definition of the word "records" contained in the Disposal Act. Certain specific types of nonrecord materials are identified in the act. These all serve purposes other than "record" purposes. They may include:

1. Materials preserved solely for purposes of reference or exhibition in libraries or museums;
2. Extra copies of documents preserved only for convenience of reference, such as
 - a. "Reading file" copies of correspondence,
 - b. "Tickler," "follow-up," or "suspense" copies of correspondence,
 - c. Identical duplicate copies of all documents maintained in the same file, and
 - d. Extra copies of printed or processed materials of which official copies have been retained for purposes of record; and
3. Stocks of publications and processed documents preserved for supply purposes.

There are also other types of nonrecord materials. They are materials that do not have the elements that make them public "records." They are

- ★ materials neither *made* nor *received* by an agency of the Government neither *in pursuance of Federal law* nor *in connection with the transaction of public business*, and
- ★ materials neither *preserved* nor *appropriate for preservation* because they have neither *evidential* nor *informational values*.

In the following two categories of nonrecord materials these elements are lacking:

1. Private materials that obviously do not fall within the scope of the definition of public "records." These include privately purchased books and other publications and correspondence and other records pertaining to private personal matters that have been kept at an office for convenience. *Records made in connection with the transaction of public business or in pursuance of Federal law are public records, it should be emphasized, and as such they belong to the office, not to the officer; they are the property of the Government and not of the citizen; and they are in no sense personal property. The appropriateness of their preservation by the Government must first be decided by the agency in which they were produced and by the National Archives before they can be legally removed or destroyed.*

2. Materials that are not being preserved or are not appropriate for preservation because they have neither evidentiary nor informational values. They may include materials that, although accumulated in the process of producing records, have themselves never acquired a "record" character. Ordinarily the following may be considered "nonrecord materials," although exceptional circumstances may result in values being attached to them for evidentiary or informational purposes; for example, letters of transmittal may constitute important legal evidence in certain control or regulatory operations of Government agencies:

- a. Preliminary or intermediate drafts of letters, memoranda, reports, or other papers, and preliminary worksheets and informal notes that do not represent significant basic steps in the preparation of record copies of documents;
- b. Letters of transmittal that do not add any information to that contained in the transmitted material;
- c. Memoranda or other papers that do not serve as the basis of official actions, for example, notices of holidays or of Red Cross or Community Chest appeals and notices of activities of Government associations or unions; and
- d. Shorthand notes, including stenographic notebooks and stenotype tapes, that have been transcribed.

Chapter 3

WHAT VALUES DO RECORDS HAVE?

Responsibilities for evaluation

Records may be evaluated from two points of view:

AN ARCHIVAL POINT OF VIEW. This is an evaluation of records primarily in terms of their ultimate usefulness to the Government and the people for purposes of (a) documenting an agency's functioning, (b) facilitating research, and (c) protecting the civic, legal, and property rights of private citizens.

AN AGENCY POINT OF VIEW. This is an evaluation of records in terms of their immediate or future usefulness to the producing agency for administrative, legal, and fiscal purposes.

Evaluations from the first point of view should be made by professionally trained archivists, whether they be on the staff of the operating agency or on the staff of the National Archives. For evaluations from the second point of view the recommendations of agency officials are of first importance. In other words, the archivist in a central agency is primarily responsible for appraising the value of records to Government agencies other than the producing agency, to the scholar, and to the private citizen. Agency officials are responsible for appraising the usefulness of records for the current or future operations of the agency, since they are responsible for the conduct of such operations.

Although a clear-cut division of responsibility exists between the National Archives and the operating agency in evaluating records, the latter can assume a large share of responsibility for determining the ultimate archival values of records in its custody. In the normal discharge of its duties an agency records staff develops a knowledge of the organizational structure and functioning of the agency and of the records that result from such functioning. This knowledge is basic to judging the value of records for purposes of functional documentation. The functional evaluations, therefore, can best be made on a cooperative basis by the records staff of an agency and the staff of the National Archives. When the agency records staff includes professionally trained archivists, the responsibility for records evaluation, from both the archival and the agency point of view, can be assumed to a greater extent by the agency.

Standards for evaluation

It has been noted in the foreword to this manual that values are attached to records for a variety of reasons. For purposes of discussion these values can be grouped into four types:

1. Values for administrative, legal, and fiscal uses by the Government,
2. Values for the protection of the civic, legal, property, and other rights of citizens,
3. Values for purposes of functional documentation, and
4. Values for research purposes.

In discussing these four types of values no attempt is made for obvious reasons to formulate precise and categorical standards by which values can be judged. It should be noted, however, that an agency records officer should consider these four types of values progressively in the order in which they are here discussed. He is responsible first for determining the immediate and future administrative, legal, and fiscal usefulness of records to his agency, as distinct from determining their ultimate documentary, research, or other values to the Government generally, the scholar, and the private citizen. Because of his familiarity with the organizational structure and functioning of his agency, the records officer is also in a position to make helpful judgments on the values of records for purposes of functional documentation. Since the needs of research are very broad, however, it is more difficult for the records officer to judge the values of records for research purposes, and the assistance of professionally competent archivists in making such judgments should be obtained.

It should be noted, moreover, that the various types of values constitute four aspects of a single problem and that all must be taken into account in any appraisal. Records may have sufficient value to justify their permanent retention if only one type of value is attached to them. In a word, any value that records may have for the American people, either directly or through their Government, whether for administrative, legal, fiscal, research, scientific, or other purposes, should be carefully considered.

VALUES FOR ADMINISTRATIVE, LEGAL, AND FISCAL USES BY THE GOVERNMENT. The first duty

of an agency records officer is to serve the needs of his agency. When he appraises any group of records, therefore, he must first determine whether they have further values for his agency. The values are likely to be administrative, legal, or fiscal. These terms may be defined in greater detail, as follows:

Administrative values. Since records are created as administrative tools to accomplish the functions for which an agency was established, they all have administrative values during the period of their current usefulness, and most types of records of permanent and enduring value are likely to be useful beyond this period for occasional administrative purposes. A record has administrative value if it helps the agency perform its current work or if it probably will help it perform future work. The primary administrative use of most records, however, is exhausted when the transactions to which they relate have been completed. These transactions may pertain to long-term fiscal, financial, regulatory, and control operations, so that their administrative value may extend over a long period of time.

Legal values. Records have legal value if they contain evidence of legally enforceable rights or obligations of the Government; and among those obligations are, of course, the legal rights of persons, both employees and nonemployees, to make claims against the Government. Among records having legal values are those showing the bases for action, such as legal decisions and opinions; financial and other documents representing legal agreements, such as leases, titles, and contracts; and records of action in particular cases, such as claims papers and legal dockets.

Fiscal values. Records of fiscal value are those which pertain to the financial transactions of an agency, such as budgets, ledgers, allotments, pay rolls, and vouchers created as tools to administer the financial obligations of an agency. After such records are no longer required as administrative tools they keep their fiscal value and must be retained to protect the agency against court action or to account for the expenditure of funds.

VALUES FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF THE PRIVATE CITIZEN. Whenever an operating agency deals directly with private citizens, the records that are valuable for the protection of private rights are to be regarded as its administrative records and should be evaluated first from the point of view of their administrative, legal, and fiscal usefulness to the agency. In certain agencies of the Government, documents are created or incorporated into records series that embody information vital to the welfare of the people. In fact, in some instances the agencies are "offices of record" for documents that establish specific civic, legal, and property rights of the private citizen; in other instances agencies create documents in

the conduct of their current operations that have an incidental value in establishing such rights. Among the records pertaining to the civic and legal rights of citizens are those providing evidence of citizenship, such as the place and date of a person's birth or his immigration and naturalization, and those establishing certain rights acquired as citizens, such as rights to old-age security, or rights resulting from service in the Government civil service or in the armed forces. Among records establishing various property rights are those pertaining to land and property titles, and to financial transactions of the Government involving loans or other financial benefits to farmers, home owners, or businessmen.

If, then, Federal agencies are "offices of record" for documents establishing rights of citizens, as is the case with respect to immigration and naturalization, old-age security, pension, and land records, agency officials are responsible for the preservation of such records for whatever period is necessary to protect these rights. Their further preservation in a central archival agency will depend on what other values they may have.

If, on the other hand, Federal agencies create records in current operations that have merely an incidental value for the protection of private rights, a critical appraisal is necessary. This appraisal should determine whether the information relating to private rights embodied in the records has been or will be exhausted at a determinable period of time, and whether the information is obtainable from other existing documentary sources. Records pertaining to property or financial rights of individuals, for example, may be valuable only for a period of time governed by statutes of limitation, after which the rights cannot be enforced by court action; and office records pertaining to the service status of Government employees may be duplicated in records of a central personnel agency or office. The Federal Government, it should be noted, is not obligated to retain records that might incidentally, or accidentally, contain facts useful only to private litigants in connection with the settlement of disputes in which the Government itself has no interest.

VALUES FOR FUNCTIONAL DOCUMENTATION.

For every agency those records should be preserved that contain the basic facts of its organizational structure and functions. Such records are needed as evidence of an agency's stewardship of the responsibilities delegated to it. This evidence should be preserved for the accounting of their work that all public officials owe to the people whom they serve. It is needed by other public officials who may wish to profit by the recorded experiences of an agency in dealing with organizational, procedural, and policy matters, as well as social and economic problems. It is needed to give

consistency and continuity to the actions of the Government.

Records should be preserved that contain adequate and authentic evidence of an agency's "organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations, or other activities." These records should show an agency's origins, its administrative development, and its present organizational structure. They should show how the agency carried out its "functions," a term used here to include all activities essential to accomplish the purposes for which an agency was established. They should show the policies it followed and the reasons for their adoption, its working methods, and its specific individual transactions, at least in an exemplary form. They should show the general social, economic, or other conditions with which it dealt.

In appraising records for purposes of functional documentation, the agency's records must be viewed in their entirety to determine their relationship and the significance of a given group of records to the entire system of documentation. In chapter 4, How Should Records Be Analyzed? will be found suggestions for steps preliminary to the appraisal of records from the functional point of view.

Certain major categories of records should be considered from the point of view of their value for purposes of functional documentation. These categories are not necessarily complete nor are they mutually exclusive.

Policy records. The term "policy" simply indicates that an agency has decided upon a course of action that is to be followed in more than one of its transactions. A policy may govern the transactions of an entire agency, or it may be confined to those of only one part of an agency. It may apply to the substantive or the facilitative functions of an agency. No rigid distinction, moreover, can be made between "policy" and "administration," since supervisory or management activities frequently result in policy formulation, and programs often deviate significantly from policies. Records that document genuinely significant activities of either type may have permanent value. The policies that are deserving of thorough documentation are those relating to the substantive functions and to the more important management or facilitative activities of an agency. The wider the applicability of the policies, the more significant are the related records likely to be. In general, the policy records to be preserved are those relating to the organization, the plans, the methods and techniques, and the rules and procedures which the agency or one of its component parts adopted to carry out its responsibilities and functions. Particularly important among such policy documents are the following types:

Organizational documents. These may include statutes and Executive orders as well as drafts and

supporting material relating to the organization or reorganization of the agency, including the creation, discontinuance, and consolidation of functions of various of its organizational units; budgets and budget-planning records, including justifications and estimates of requirements; interpretations, opinions, and memoranda of law; organizational and functional charts; directories; correspondence and memoranda delegating or defining powers and responsibilities, or showing working relationships with other Federal agencies, State and local governments, or industry or private organizations; staff studies and special reports relating to organizational problems.

Procedural documents. These may include procedural manuals, directives, rules and regulations, circulars, instructions, memoranda, or any regularly recurring issuance that establishes a course of action for the agency or one of its component parts. The sets of issuances should be obtained at the administrative level at which they were created. They should include superseded issuances as well as those currently in effect. The procedural documents may include also any staff studies or special reports relating to methodology, techniques, and operations, or to analyses of workloads and performances. A master set of the forms developed for each of the agency's operations may also be included.

Reports. These may include annual reports, or other periodic progress reports, whether narrative or statistical; special reports of accomplishment; transcripts of hearings; and minutes of meetings and conferences.

Operating records. The bulk of the records of most agencies are not those that record its general management, the determination of its policies, or its internal administration but rather those that record the specific individual transactions that make up its actual operations. These records not only have the greatest bulk but also present the most serious problems of evaluation. Normally most of the significant evidence relative to the operations of an agency is relayed upward through reports of a statistical or narrative nature, through correspondence and memoranda, and other summary records. It would seem, therefore, that the records of individual transactions are seldom basically essential as evidence of policy, organization, function, or procedure. In some agencies, however, the preservation of operating records, or at least samples of them, is necessary to show how policies were implemented, how procedures were executed, and what kinds of problems, not always recorded at the policy level, were encountered. A selection of operating records may be necessary to exemplify the administrative processes at the lower level or to illustrate the variations in such processes.

In regulatory or quasi-judicial agencies, for example, policy is frequently developed through the determination of particular cases. In such agencies a selection might be made of a limited number of outstanding cases designed to illustrate the more interesting points of law or the application of various types of sanctions or regulatory measures. In the case of new agencies of this kind, or of new programs, complete documentation of operations may be desirable for the early period. In agencies having extensive field organizations, it may be desirable to select records of representative offices to show how policies and procedures worked at the "grass-roots" level or to show how governmental activities impinged on the life of the people. The retention of properly selected samples of operating records is usually sufficient to serve the purposes of documentation. Problems relating to the evaluation of operating records from other points of view will be discussed later.

Housekeeping records. A substantial part of the records of any agency represent the everyday personnel, fiscal, procurement, and property-control actions by which its internal operations are carried on. The evaluation of such records is affected by the retention of related records by the Civil Service Commission, the Treasury Department, and the General Accounting Office. Such records ordinarily pertain to activities common to all agencies and therefore, as a rule, contain little evidence essential to an understanding of the functioning of any particular agency. The preservation of selected groups of such records is necessary, however, to reflect the major facilitating operations of an agency and to help in the interpretation of other records representing its substantive functions. These groups will include the basic fiscal and accounting records specified for retention in the National Archives General Schedule No. 5. Less important from a documentary point of view, but not necessarily from the legal or administrative point of view, are the basic personnel records that are to be preserved in accordance with General Schedule No. 1. If an agency carries on internal management activities that are distinctive, that deviate from the normal pattern, or that pertain to problems peculiar to the agency, records on such activities or problems should be preserved.

Informational records. In addition to administrative issuances, such as regulations and other directives and manuals of operation, which should clearly be preserved permanently, considerable quantities of printed and processed materials of an informational character are produced in most Government agencies. The form of such materials is not the determining factor in considering their record character, for books are specifically included among the documentary materials that fall within the scope of the definition of "records"

in the Disposal Act. It is important to note, however, that a distinction should be made between the "record copies" of such materials and the nonrecord distribution copies. The archival agency is concerned only with the disposition of the record copies. The informational records are of two types: The publications produced in the performance of substantive functions and the publicity materials produced in the performance of informational or promotional activities.

As a rule, record copies of publications of the first type should be retained for ultimate preservation in libraries rather than as part of an archival record group. This is the case with respect to bulletins, pamphlets, circulars, and other materials produced by agencies primarily engaged in scientific, statistical, or research activities. There are exceptions to this rule, however. Record copies of administrative publications created by an agency that are basic to an understanding of its functioning or organization and publications accumulated by an agency that are basic to its own policy formulation may be considered suitable for archival preservation. Publications filed with records relating to their creation may also be considered suitable, particularly if the records contain successive original drafts that reflect substantial changes in content. If publications that do not directly relate to the agency's functioning or organization and that are readily separated without loss of significant interrelationships are interfiled with records, they should be removed before their transfer to an archival agency.

Record copies of informational records of the second type, namely the publicity materials relating to promotional activities, should be retained for ultimate preservation in an archival agency, while the nonrecord distribution copies may be selected for inclusion in a library at the discretion of the librarian. They provide the documentation of the programs that some agencies must undertake to interpret their functions to the public. The publicity materials may be in the form of press and radio releases, bulletins, pamphlets, charts, posters and similar materials. They are produced in large quantities but usually disappear almost as rapidly as they are created, for they are often not placed in organized files with other records and so are not preserved. The problem with respect to such materials is that of obtaining master files from which all duplicate copies have been eliminated. The files should be obtained at the administrative level at which they were created. Press clippings should be preserved if they are necessary to record informational activities or substantive functions of an agency on which other documentary materials are inadequate and if they are organized in an accessible manner. The origin of the press clippings must also be taken into account. Press clippings of specialized or small newspapers or journals should be given preference over those taken from

metropolitan newspapers that are readily available at the Library of Congress.

VALUES FOR RESEARCH. If a careful selection is made of the records that are to constitute an agency's documentation, most legitimate demands of both the scholar and the public administrator will be met. Records, however, obviously have other than documentary values. The word "records" was defined in the Disposal Act to include materials that should be preserved "because of the informational value of data contained therein." The information contained in such records, apart from any considerations of functional documentation, has an absolute value. The appraisal therefore must rest upon research values—to the historian, political scientist, geographer, economist, sociologist, statistician, physical scientist, and others. *This judgment on value, in a word, is made solely from the point of view of research.*

This type of appraisal is made piecemeal, for the records are judged on the merits of their informational content, not on their relationships to the documentation of the agency as a whole. The appraisal requires professional knowledge of research methodology and research needs, as distinct from specialized knowledge of the administrative background of the records. The appraiser should use different criteria in evaluating records of different periods. Records of an early period may be valuable for academic researches while similar records of a later date may be valueless because of the existence of other more usable sources.

Three categories of records frequently contain data of informational value, although they have little or no significance for functional documentation. They are operating, statistical, and scientific records.

Operating records. It has already been noted that selected samples of operating records may have significance for the documentation of an agency's functioning. Such records may also have a research interest because of the detailed information they may contain about individuals, organizations, places, or other matters, or because, in the aggregate, they contain facts about social or economic conditions. In regulative or quasi-judicial agencies, for example, operating records may contain economic data submitted by individuals or organizations that could not be obtained elsewhere. This is particularly true if the agency requires the submission of data on business, labor, agriculture, or other operations.

The retention of the entire series of such records may be necessary. Before this determination is made, however, other materials, including non-Federal records and published works, that might contain similar or approximately similar information to that contained in the records in question should be considered. The appraiser should ask himself from what source could the same information be developed if the records did

not exist, or whether the records are of such a unique character that other available materials would not serve the equivalent purpose.

Usually it will be found that the retention of properly selected samples of operating records will serve all research purposes. The selection should take into account the various factors affecting the value of the records, such as the size of the corporation or organization concerned, the volume of its business, and the importance of the transaction recorded or of the individual concerned. The agency officials who worked with the records should be consulted in developing the method of selection. If public-reporting forms are involved, the statisticians of the Bureau of the Budget concerned with the application of the Federal Reports Act of 1942 (56 Stat. 1078) should be consulted.

Statistical records. Many agencies have significant quantities of questionnaires, schedules, and similar papers representing the raw data from which statistical tabulations or analyses have been made. Certain operating records that were originally created for other than statistical purposes but that might be put to statistical uses may also fall within this category. Ordinarily, statistical records should be released to an archival agency only if they have significant information about individual persons, corporations, or the like, or if in the aggregate they have significant information about social or economic conditions, and if their quantity, complexity, or other attributes are not such as to make their further use impracticable. To be significant the information should be of such a character that it could not be obtained elsewhere and that it would be valuable for a diversity of studies. Statistical records that have value for a specialized study only should ordinarily be retained by the Government agency, particularly if this specialized study is to be made by the agency that has custody of the records. With statistical records, as with operating records, a selection of samples should be made whenever feasible. Again the advice of agency officials who worked with the records or of statisticians of the Bureau of the Budget may be of special assistance.

Scientific records. In addition to the records that document the scientific functions of Government agencies, which are clearly suitable for archival preservation, records are created that are of a purely scientific character. They contain data on experiments and investigations. Their value is determined by their importance for the history of science or for the conduct of further scientific researches. The problem of evaluation arises mainly with respect to records needed for further researches, for obviously records pertaining to the history of scientific activities in the Federal Government are valuable. When scientific records

provide the means of carrying on further researches or of verifying the results of past researches, they are clearly suitable for permanent preservation. Frequently, however, scientific records have attributes that make their further use impracticable. They may

have significance only for a particular experiment, or they may be intelligible only to the persons who recorded the data. The agency officials who conducted the scientific activity should be consulted to ascertain the further value of such records.

Chapter 4

HOW SHOULD RECORDS BE ANALYZED?

Objectives

An analysis of an agency's records has two purposes:

1. *To identify the records of enduring or permanent value that the Government should undertake to preserve indefinitely, and*
2. *To identify the records that are disposable, now or later.*

These two purposes represent two aspects of the same problem. The selection of records for preservation is the positive aspect of the problem of records disposition; the disposal of records is the negative one. If the records that should be preserved indefinitely are identified, it may be assumed that the value of the remainder of the records, although some of them may need to be kept for a number of years, is only temporary.

The problem then remaining is to determine after what period of time the value of the "temporary" records will disappear or so dwindle that their further preservation is not worth while. In other words, the records officer decides in effect: "These records the Government should keep indefinitely. All the rest should be thrown away—some now, some when they are 5 years old, some when the accounts to which they relate are settled, and others at other times." There are, then, just two questions the records officer should ask himself at this stage:

1. What are the records of this agency that the Government should preserve indefinitely?
2. When may each class of the remainder be thrown away?

Methods

To determine which records are disposable and which should be preserved indefinitely, the records officer should normally take the following steps:

Step 1. Analyze the organizational structure and functioning of the agency.

This analysis should provide general information on the following points:

1. *The status of each office in the administrative hierarchy of the agency,*

2. *The character of the functions performed by each office, and*
3. *The character of the activities performed on a given function by each office.*

The status of an office in the administrative hierarchy of the agency can be most easily determined, and upon this status the value of the records largely depends. A cursory examination of both the national and field organizations of an agency will usually reveal which are the key staff and line offices. Of fundamental importance are the records produced in the administrative and staff offices where the policy, procedural, and organizational decisions by which an agency is governed are made. Attached to such offices are various organizational units engaged in handling legal, budgetary, procedural, and internal administrative activities, or engaged in research or investigations incidental to the formulation of policy or procedures. Less obviously important and more difficult to identify are the valuable records pertaining to supervisory or management functions. Lowest in the administrative scale are the offices concerned with detailed and frequently routine operations, which result in records that are even less likely to have enduring value.

The character of the functions performed by each office is also significant in determining the value of records. Functions may be characterized as substantive and facilitative. Substantive functions are those relating to the technical and professional work of the agency, work that distinguishes the particular agency from all other agencies. These functions deserve thorough documentation. Facilitative functions are those relating to the internal management of the agency, the housekeeping activities that are common to all agencies. Although these activities admittedly are important to efficient operation, they are not distinctive. They are, in fact, merely incidental to the performance of the agency's substantive functions.

In analyzing the functions of his agency the records officer should particularly identify those that have expiration dates, for advance preparation should be made for the orderly disposition of the records pertaining to them. Most obvious among the terminable functions are those relating to emergency programs

arising out of a war or out of economic or social maladjustments, for such programs end when the emergency ceases to exist. Other terminable functions are those relating to projects specially authorized by Congress in addition to the regular functions of an agency or those relating to projects carried out at periodic intervals such as the taking of a census of population. In this category, also, are regular functions of an agency that are terminated by Congressional action or by agency reorganizations.

The character of the activities performed on a given function by each office in the administrative hierarchy is likewise significant in determining the value of records. In the execution of any given function action is usually taken by offices at several administrative levels. These activities normally become progressively less important as the work flows through the various levels to completion, changing from the important to the routine, from the general to the specific. On each function, as a consequence, there is a chain of successive transactions, each link of which represents a preliminary step toward the final action. The value of any particular series of records in this chain is largely determined by its relationship to other series. If these relationships are analyzed, it is possible to determine the relative value of various series in providing evidence on organization and function. It may be found that certain series contain substantially all the evidence needed, or that certain series may be required to provide supplementary evidence. To be adequate this evidence may have to cover the entire range of an agency's activities—at least, in an exemplary form—from the top to the bottom, from the important to the routine.

Step 2. Survey the record materials of the agency.

The surveys can be made most thoroughly by the records officer and his immediate staff. When speed is essential and the volume of records to be covered is large, however, it is necessary to use a questionnaire form that can be filled out by the people who actually have charge of the records. This approach requires careful planning, detailed instruction, and close editing, but it makes participants of operating officials throughout the agency and permits completion of the work far more rapidly than would be possible if one person undertook to do the job.

The survey should ultimately cover all records as well as "nonrecord materials" of the agency, but, unless the agency is very small, it is usually best to survey the records of one bureau or division at a time. The records of large field offices that have substantial autonomy and considerable freedom in the organization of their records should be surveyed just as are those of bureaus or divisions at the headquarters of the agency. Smaller field offices that keep their records in substantial conformity with instructions from

headquarters, however, seldom need to be covered by individual surveys, though a survey of the records of representative offices is desirable. Motion pictures, sound recordings, and photographs can be surveyed by the same general methods as written records, but, since many technical problems are involved, agencies should consult with the National Archives before beginning such a survey.

The forms to be used in the survey should be devised to suit the needs of the particular agency. Ordinarily the forms should provide space for entering the following facts on each records series:

1. *The office that filed or originally kept the series of records,*
2. *The location and present custody of the records,*
3. *The identification of the series,*
4. *The beginning and ending dates of the series,*
5. *The internal arrangement of the files,*
6. *The existence in the agency of other copies of the same papers,*
7. *The existence in the agency of other files that contain the same information,*
8. *The size and kind of containers,*
9. *The quantity of records in the series and the annual rate of accumulation,*
10. *The kind and frequency of use, and*
11. *The opinion of the person or persons in charge of the records as to their value and the periods they will need to be retained.*

The office that filed or originally kept the records should be shown in full, for example:

Statistics Branch, Operations Division.

Historical Section, General Administrative Services, Office of the Quartermaster General.

Budget Section, Fiscal Branch, Office of Price Administration.

This office may be very different from the office that now has charge of the records. For example, the records of Camp X of the Army may now be in the hands of The Adjutant General's Records Administration Center in St. Louis, but they would still be reported as records of Camp X because that camp filed them. When an office is abolished, another office or division sometimes takes over its activities and records and continues to file papers in them. This practice is not to be recommended, for a set of files should be cut off when it is transferred elsewhere and a new set of files should be started. If this practice is followed, however, the records should be reported as records of the last office that actually added to them.

The location and present custody of the series should be shown, as, for example:

Room 211, Walker-Johnson Building, Division of Mail and Records.

The records series described on the form should

be identified clearly, and its nature, content, and purpose should be shown. This information is essential in the evaluation of records, their appraisal by the National Archives, and their subsequent identification at the time of actual disposal. Include form numbers and titles, decimal file headings, and similar data when applicable. For forms and memoranda indicate whether the copies in the series are ribbon or carbon and whether signed or unsigned. Note the following examples of identifications:

Signed ribbon copies of Form 32, Service Order, for all services performed in photographic laboratory.

Requests for copies of publications and copies of replies thereto.

Unsigned carbon copies of Form 1012c, travel vouchers, with accompanying travel authorizations, subvouchers, and memoranda of exceptions.

Project files for all construction projects, including, for each project, signed ribbon copy of project application (Form 817), unsigned carbon copy of review memorandum, unsigned carbon of notice of approval (Form 11), signed carbon of advice of allocation (Form 319), signed ribbon copy of quarterly report of expenditures (Form 82), signed ribbon copy of notice of abandonment or completion (Form 38), signed carbon copy of advice of rescission (Form 17), and memoranda, reports, and correspondence relating to the project.

Dates should be shown as exactly as possible, for example:

April 6, 1941, to date.

June 1919 to May 1942.

A brief statement of the filing scheme or arrangement within the series should be given, for differences between the arrangement of two series may determine which is to be kept and which disposed of. Note that what is wanted is the *internal* arrangement of each records series itself. Arrangement should be noted as follows:

Arranged alphabetically by subject.

Arranged chronologically by date of report.

Arranged numerically by map number.

If the arrangement is broken down within this basic pattern, note as follows:

Arranged chronologically by date of report and alphabetically thereunder by subject.

Arranged alphabetically by name of registrant and chronologically thereunder by date of supporting papers.

The existence of copies of the papers in other files in the agency, if known, should be indicated, thus:

Carbon copies also in Division of Finance and Accounts.
Originals of Form 57 retained by Division of Personnel Management.

If there is any substantial difference between the copies of the documents, it is important to note that fact

because it often determines which copy should be retained and which destroyed, for example:

Signed ribbon copies of these forms with notation of action by Director are in General Files.

Carbon copies without final computation of cost are retained by issuing division.

A brief description of any other records of the agency containing substantially similar information should be given. Statistical results of an analysis, for example, are usually found on questionnaire forms, on tabulation sheets, and in compiled reports. Essential data in requisitions are often carried over into purchase orders and vouchers. Detailed reports of subordinate or field offices are often summarized in reports of offices at higher levels. The duplication is generally only partial in each case. The records officer must know how a given series is related to another and the extent to which their contents duplicate each other.

The size and kind of containers of the records should be shown. Information such as this is valuable in planning transfers and removals to storage:

Four-drawer letter-size file cabinets.

Wooden boxes, 30" x 15" x 10".

Card trays, 12" x 6" x 4".

Bound volumes, averaging 14" x 8" x 3".

The quantity of records and the annual rate of accumulation should be shown. This is easiest given in numbers of volumes or containers, for example:

49 file drawers; annual increase, 11 file drawers.

114 volumes; annual increase, 7 volumes.

The nature and frequency of use is perhaps the most important criterion in determining whether records can be disposed of. This should be shown as precisely as possible, for example:

Used approximately 15 times a week in preparing answers to exceptions taken by General Accounting Office.

Never used.

Used approximately 15 times per month by Review Division in connection with review of current projects.

Used once or twice a year by Legal Division in search of precedent cases.

The recommendation of the official in charge of the records as to their disposition should be given. Employees who handle records currently can give the records officer valuable advice as to how long they should be kept. In giving the records officer their opinions, these persons should keep in mind the fact that once records become noncurrent for administrative purposes they can be kept more economically outside the active files. Temporary storage should not be in working offices. Permanent retention should be in the National Archives. Records of no value should be disposed of promptly. Internal regulations, those of other agencies, or laws that require retention for cer-

tain periods should be cited, wherever possible, in support of the recommendation. If it is thought that records should be kept at hand temporarily, the time for such retention should be stated explicitly in terms of months or years after current action is completed.

Step 3. Analyze the survey reports by organizational units and functions.

This analysis should reveal the following information:

1. *The significance of each records series to the over-all documentation of the agency's organizational structure and functioning,*
2. *The relationship of records series to each other, and*
3. *On the basis of the significance and the relationships of records series, the value of each (a) for archival purposes, and (b) for agency purposes.*

No matter how thoroughly the survey was made, it will be found that supplemental information will be required to formulate dependable disposition recommendations on various records series. It will be helpful to review chapter 3 of this manual while making these disposition determinations.

On the substantive functions of the agency—functions that reflect its professional and technical work—the survey reports should be utilized in the following ways:

Survey reports on the records of offices concerned with major policy, procedural, and organizational matters should be brought together for purposes of analysis. In reviewing these reports the records officer should ask himself the following questions:

1. Which administrative units in the national office have primary responsibility for making the policy, procedural, and organizational decisions of the agency?
2. Which field offices have discretion in the determination of policy?
3. Which administrative units perform activities that are auxiliary to making policy and procedural decisions?
4. Which records series are essential to reflect these decisions?
5. Are these decisions reflected in central correspondence files? If so, can file units within the central files pertaining to housekeeping activities be removed?

Survey reports should also be grouped by major functions of the agency for purposes of analysis. These functions, as has been noted, may be carried out through various administrative levels in the agency, in both its national and its field offices. In reviewing the reports, the records officer should ascertain the

successive transactions of the function performed at each administrative level, should identify the records series that result from each of the transactions, and should analyze the purpose and content of the records series and of any forms embodied in them. After this has been done the significance and the relationships of the records series at different administrative levels can be determined. The records officer should ask himself:

1. Where does the primary responsibility for the supervisory and management activities of the function rest? In which office at headquarters? In which office within the field? Which series of records are essential to reflect the supervisory and managerial activities? To what extent are such records physically duplicated in subordinate offices?
2. Which of the successive transactions performed under the function result in summary records? Are the final summary records adequate for all foreseeable purposes? Are the final records self-explanatory?
3. Which transactions result in preliminary or intermediate records? Which records are merely subsidiary to the creation of other records? To what extent is the content of such records duplicated in other records? Is there reasonable probability that the detail records may be needed to prove or sustain the summary of final records, or that they may be needed for investigative purposes? When do such detail records cease to be useful for administrative, legal, and fiscal purposes? Is their retention governed by statutes of limitation, or by subsequent actions that occur?
4. Which records should be preserved in exemplary form to show the administrative processes at the lower levels?

On the facilitative functions of the agency, the survey reports should be utilized in a slightly different manner. The facilitative functions relate to the internal management of the various Government agencies, the housekeeping activities that are common to all agencies. The administrative processes that are followed in carrying out such functions are similar in all agencies and vary only to the degree that such functions are broken down by administrative specialization. These administrative processes determine

Which forms should be used,
How many copies of each form should be made,
Where each copy should be sent,
Where each copy should be filed, and
How long each copy should be kept.

They are therefore of interest to the records officer, who, accordingly, should become part of the team that is concerned with the internal management of his agency.

In analyzing housekeeping records it is generally advisable to consider separately the records of each of the major facilitative functions for the entire agency. To do this it is not necessary to make an actual physical survey of such records throughout the agency. It is more important to obtain or compile a list of standard and agency forms, with samples if possible, and to obtain information on the offices that prepare each of the forms, the number of copies made, the distribution of the copies, the uses made of each copy, and the relationships of each of the forms to other forms.

The major facilitative functions of an agency can usually be grouped as follows:

- Administrative services,
- Budget,
- Communications,
- Fiscal,
- Legal,
- Personnel, and
- Property, supplies, and equipment.

After assembling the forms by major functions, the records officer can analyze each of them. The major functions, for example, are usually further subdivided into more specific transactions. Under fiscal operations forms are developed for accounting, auditing, and various other transactions. Similarly under personnel operations forms are developed for applications, classification, placement, rating, and other purposes. The extent and nature of the major functions and the transactions performed under them depend upon the size of the agency involved and the degree of administrative specialization.

After determining the transactions performed under the facilitative functions, the records officers should arrange the forms for purposes of analysis in the order in which the work is performed or the steps in transactions are completed. This arrangement will make it easy to determine the specific purpose for which a form was prepared, the relationship of a copy of the form to other copies, and the relationship of the form to other forms. The procurement of property, supplies, and equipment, for example, results in the following kinds of records:

- Requests for purchase requisitions,
- Purchase requisitions,
- Invitations to bid,
- Purchase orders or contracts,
- Expediting records,
- Bills of lading,
- Receiving reports,
- Inspection and testing reports,
- Stores (or stock) ledgers,

- Cash vouchers,
- Paid checks,
- General ledgers, and
- Inventory records.

When the forms have been thus arranged and examined, the records officer should ask himself the following questions:

1. Which series of records are necessary to reflect the major facilitating operations and to help in the interpretation of records of substantive functions?
2. Which series show unique facilitating operations?
3. Which steps in each of the transactions result in forms that are merely subsidiary to the creation of summary or final forms? To what extent is the content of such forms duplicated in summary or final forms? Is there reasonable probability that the detail records may be needed to prove or sustain the summary or final records, or that they may be needed for investigative purposes?
4. Which steps in each of the transactions are preliminary to other actions? Which forms are involved in these steps? When do such forms lose their usefulness? Is their retention period governed by subsequent actions that occur?
5. Which forms are distributed merely for informational purposes?

While the analysis of the value of housekeeping records must be made on a form-by-form basis, the disposition recommendations must take into account how such forms are filed, for the retention periods established for a given file unit must cover all forms within the unit. Practical suggestions on how to prepare schedules, so that the records can be removed and disposed of promptly upon the expiration of the retention periods, are found in chapter 7 of this manual.

Step 4. Prepare a written plan for the disposition of the agency's records.

It should include the following information:

1. An identification of the series of records of each function that should be preserved, and a schedule for their planned retirement, and
2. An identification of the series of records of each function that are disposable, and a schedule for their periodic disposal.

The word "disposition" in a broad sense includes anything that is done to records, whether it be elimination, transfer to temporary inactive storage, reduction by microphotography, or transfer to an archival agency.

A disposition plan, therefore, is a written statement on the actions to be taken with respect to all records series produced by an agency or one of its component parts. It differs from a disposal schedule in that it is comprehensive—it covers the records to be retained as well as those to be destroyed.

Disposition plans will establish a comprehensive and considered policy for the retention and the disposal of an agency's records. They will provide an over-all view of the documentation that an agency plans to preserve permanently. They will provide information on the relationships of records to be retained to those to be destroyed. They will thus provide an invaluable tool in the appraisal of records, for dependable judgments on what should be destroyed cannot be made without a knowledge of what is retained. They will afford an opportunity for a collaborative effort on the part of the agency records officer and the staff of the National Archives in developing a planned program for the retention and disposal of records, for disposition plans should be prepared in collaboration with, or at least should be reviewed by, the staff of the National Archives. The

archival review will make possible an evaluation of records for purposes of research and functional documentation, as distinct from an evaluation for agency usefulness.

The format in which a disposition plan is to be developed is left to the discretion of the agency. Forms designed to obtain authorization to destroy records may be used for purposes of preparing comprehensive schedules; items are included for all series of records of an agency and the action to be taken with respect to each when it becomes noncurrent is indicated. It should be noted, however, that schedules are instruments for obtaining authorization for the disposal of records. Normally they should not include items on which disposal authorization is not requested. A preferable way of preparing a disposition plan is to use forms devised for this purpose by the agency.

Disposal schedules, obviously, are a means of implementing one phase of a disposition plan. They provide the authorization for the regular disposal of designated series of records after the lapse of specified periods of time. Information on how to prepare disposal schedules is found in chapter 7 of this manual.

Chapter 5

WHEN AND HOW SHOULD RECORDS BE RETIRED?

Objectives

In chapter 4 the development of disposition plans was suggested. These plans, it was noted, should cover both the retention and the disposal of records. Retention might involve either their reproduction by microphotographic processes or their retirement. In this chapter attention will be focused on the retirement of records. By retirement is meant the removal of records from the offices and equipment in which they were created and accumulated (1) to the National Archives, (2) to intermediate depositories, or (3) to other Government agencies. Each of these alternatives will be discussed.

The retirement of records represents a positive step toward either their permanent or their temporary preservation. It is one of the positive aspects of a records management program in that it is concerned with the maintenance and preservation, rather than the destruction, of records.

The immediate objectives in retiring records are to effect economies in the use of office space and equipment and to promote efficiency in the use of records.

To achieve economy and efficiency, the retirement of records must be planned carefully. The plan must establish a timetable for the movement of records, based on a careful analysis of the periods of their current administrative usefulness and of their ultimate value as permanent archives of the agency.

Transfer to National Archives

The accessioning policies of the National Archives derive from its responsibility for the oversight and care of all records of the Government that have enduring value. They are based upon sections 3 and 6 of the National Archives Act and upon the resolutions of the National Archives Council adopted on November 9, 1944, in pursuance of those sections. They are clarified in certain details by the definition of "records" in section 1 of the Records Disposal Act of July 7, 1943, and by sections 1 and 2 of Executive Order 9784, "Providing for the More Efficient Use and for the Transfer and Other Disposition of Government Records."

Under section 6 of the National Archives Act the

National Archives Council is authorized to "define the classes of material which shall be transferred to the National Archives Building and establish regulations governing such transfer." In pursuance of this section, the Council on November 9, 1944, authorized the Archivist of the United States to requisition records that fall into the following classes:

I. Any archives or records that the head of the agency that has custody of them may offer for transfer to the National Archives.

II. Any archives or records that have been in existence for more than fifty years unless the head of the agency that has the custody of them certifies in writing to the Archivist that they must be retained in his custody for use in the conduct of the regular current business of the said agency.

III. Any archives or records of any Federal agency that has gone out of existence unless the head of the agency that has the custody of them certifies in writing to the Archivist that they must be retained in his custody for use in performing transferred functions of the discontinued agency or in liquidating its affairs.

IV. Any other archives or records that the National Archives Council by special resolution may authorize to be transferred to the National Archives.

It should be noted that the Council resolutions provide only a general guide as to the classes of records to be transferred to the National Archives. The most important factor to be considered in determining the eligibility of records for transfer to an archival agency is their value. It is implicit in the National Archives Act and in Executive Order 9784 that records must have permanent or enduring value to be preserved in the National Archives, for the act indicates that records of "no permanent value or historical interest" will be destroyed, while the Executive order assumes that records having "enduring value" will be preserved.

Transfer procedure

Agency offers of records for transfer. Although certain classes of records may be requisitioned by the Archivist of the United States, the policy of the National Archives is to encourage the agencies of the Government to take the initiative in offering records for transfer. The transfer of Government records to the National Archives is thus usually an entirely volun-

tary action: A Government official is as a rule under no compulsion to offer records for transfer and the Archivist of the United States is under no obligation to take into his custody any records so offered.

The **source of the offer** should be a responsible official of the Government agency. The release of records to the National Archives is determined by responsible officials of the agency that has accumulated them, after they have considered the character of the records, their current usefulness, the condition of their storage in the agency, and other factors. Whenever practicable agencies should centralize their relationships with the National Archives in some one office, preferably in that of the records officer. If the responsibility for liaison with the National Archives is vested in the records officer, all offers of transfer should be cleared through his office. If an agency issues directives to this effect, copies of such directives should be placed on file in the National Archives. In accordance with such directives the National Archives will return to the agency for central clearance any offers of transfer made by unauthorized officials.

The **form of the offer** may be either written or oral, although the written form is preferable. The Government official who wishes to transfer records to the National Archives should offer them in a letter directed to the Archivist of the United States. The letter should describe the records in sufficient detail to permit their ready identification and should include information as to their whereabouts and as to the official with whom a representative of the Archivist should get in touch regarding their transfer. If the official feels that restrictions must be placed on the use of the records offered for transfer, he should state this fact in the letter. In this connection reference should be made to sections 3 and 6a of the National Archives Act as amended March 3, 1948. The offers of transfer, however, may be made orally to a representative of the Archivist. Offers of a given group of records *should not be made both in the oral and the written form.*

The **coverage of the offer** may vary. The offer may result in one of four types of transactions:

1. A simple transaction resulting in the transfer of a specific group of records from an agency.
2. A multiple transaction resulting in the transfer of various groups of records either at various intervals or from various places. Such transactions may concern groups of records to be released to the National Archives either at a later date or at a date contingent upon other definite events or processes. Such transactions may also concern groups of records located in a number of different offices, as, for example, field offices of a given class. If the transfer of multiple groups of records is likely to require more than 6 months

to complete, the offer should be broken down into several separate offers each of which covers groups that can be accessioned within a 6-month period.

3. A continuing or recurrent transaction resulting in the transfer of records of a given kind that are to be released to the National Archives periodically as they accumulate.
4. An informal transaction resulting in the transfer to the National Archives of relatively small volumes of records found in the possession of an agency that are covered by description and date in a previously completed accessioning job.

The **acknowledgment of the offer**, whether it was in a written or an oral form, will be made to the agency on National Archives Form 112. On this form will be indicated the job number assigned to the transfer proposal. Further correspondence or conversations relative to the proposal should refer to this job number. The job numbers will be of two types: (1) If the transaction involves a transfer of a specific group of records or the transfer of multiple groups at various times or from various places, the job number will be assigned in the style 450-1, 450-2. (2) If the transaction involves the transfer of a given type of records at periodic intervals as they accumulate, the Archivist through his representative will enter into a commitment to accept such records by a process of continuing or recurrent transfer. This commitment will be considered a continuing transfer agreement between the agency and the National Archives. The National Archives may terminate such an agreement at its discretion and will inform the agency of its reasons for doing so. Continuing transfer agreements will be assigned job numbers in the style 450-C1, 450-C2. All further correspondence relative to such agreements should refer to the job numbers assigned to them. Thus, if an agency, in the course of a few years, desires to transfer additional records of the same kind that are covered by a continuing transfer agreement, the offer of transfer should refer to the job number assigned to the agreement. The offers of additional records will be assigned additional job numbers in the style 450-1 (under the appropriate continuing transfer agreement number, as, for example, 445-C12), 450-2.

Appraisal of records offered. Upon receipt of an offer of records from a Government agency, a representative of the National Archives will inspect the records and make recommendations concerning the proposed transfer. In order to prepare his recommendations the representative will usually visit the agency offering the records to obtain additional information about them and the problems involved in their physical transfer to the National Archives. After study he will prepare a report, identifying the records, indicating their volume, the frequency and nature of

their use, the restrictions on their use, and the existence of related finding aids, and containing an evaluation of the records. He will follow the appraisal standards contained in chapter 3 of this manual in making the evaluation. On the basis of it he will make recommendations as to which of the records should be requisitioned.

Transfer of custody. In accordance with section 6 of the National Archives Act the National Archives Council on November 9, 1944, established regulations governing the transfer of custody of records, as follows:

(1) That when the Archivist shall issue his requisition for any archives or records he shall furnish to a duly authorized representative of the agency that has the custody of them an inventory of the material covered by such requisition; (2) That when, and not until, this inventory shall have been certified to by the signatures of the representatives of said agency and of the Archivist, respectively, and the said archives or records shall have been delivered by the representative of the said agency to the representative of the Archivist either at the depository in which they are stored or at a depository under the control of the Archivist, the said archives or records shall pass into the legal custody of the Archivist of the United States: *Provided*, That records of the Federal Government that are not in the legal custody of any other agency of the Government shall be deemed to be in the legal custody of the Archivist and may be transferred by him to a depository under his control without the formalities of issuing a requisition or delivering an inventory.

In accordance with the Council regulations cited above, the National Archives will prepare an "Accession Inventory" in duplicate and a formal requisition by the Archivist on the official having custody of the records for the transfer of the records in question. On a mutually convenient date the Archivist's requisition for the records will be presented, the copies of the "Accession Inventory" will be signed by representatives of the two agencies involved, and the records will be turned over to the Archivist's representative, who will assume the legal custody of the records on behalf of the Archivist. The records will then be transferred to the National Archives, usually in trucks provided by the National Archives. The physical removal will be handled by workers on the staff of the National Archives.

Other factors determining eligibility

Currency of records. Records must be noncurrent, as well as valuable, to be eligible for transfer to the National Archives. "Currency" relates to the use made of records in carrying on the governmental function in connection with which they were accumulated. It is to be distinguished from the "activity" resulting from other uses, for example, the use of records by the public or the use of records of one agency by other agencies. To determine where records should be held the character and the frequency of their use, their na-

ture and value, and the facilities affecting use must all be considered. A central archival agency should not normally accept records likely to involve frequent loans back to the office of origin, although an intermediate depository might undertake such services.

Permanent and temporary records interfiled. The transfer to a central archival agency of large bodies of records containing a relatively small proportion of permanently valuable documents interfiled with larger quantities of records of only temporary administrative value should be avoided. For the period of their administrative usefulness such records should be retained in an intermediate depository, where they should be screened of routine records before their transfer. Wherever possible, agencies should revise their filing systems so that permanently valuable records can be readily segregated from records of lesser value without time-consuming screening of individual documents.

In all cases, it will be expected that blocks of non-record material and records authorized for disposal will have been removed prior to transfer.

Restrictions on use. Records are eligible for transfer to an archival agency regardless of the fact that they cannot at once be made available for research purposes and may not become available for an indeterminate period. The governing factor is the value of the records. The Archivist of the United States may refuse, however, to accession records the use of which is subject to restrictions believed to be unreasonable and contrary to the public interest unless he is required to do so by statute or Executive order. Where documents have been stamped with security classifications, agencies should downgrade them wherever possible prior to transfer. When classified documents are transferred to an archival agency, systematic arrangements for their later downgrading should be made at the time of transfer.

Conditions within agencies. It is expected that agencies offering records for transfer to the National Archives will offer them by complete and logical units accompanied by any pertinent indexes, that all records within the limits of the date span and description of the records offered will be included, that the records will be in good order, and that the agency will bear the cost of bringing to Washington any records not in the Washington metropolitan area. The transfer of records from executive agencies in annual or biennial increments should be avoided, since the handling of such small amounts is generally uneconomical.

Removal to records depositories

The removal of certain types of records from office space and equipment to cheaper facilities at a certain stage in their existence is desirable in the interest of economical and efficient management. Economy and efficiency cannot be achieved, however, if records are

removed to storage and then forgotten. The timetable for their movement to an intermediate depository should specify when records are to be destroyed or are to be transferred to the National Archives or, if these actions cannot be determined in advance, should specify when screening or microfilming operations are to be performed on the records.

The **types of records** that are suitable for maintenance in intermediate depositories can be defined only in general terms. They may include both permanently valuable records that are still relatively active for administrative purposes and temporary records that are used for varying periods. The specific groups of records that should be retired must be determined by the agency on the basis of (1) the duration of their usefulness, and (2) the character of their usefulness.

The period when records will be used in regular current operations should be considered. If it is short, it may be advisable to hold them in the offices in which they were accumulated until they can be destroyed. Most housekeeping records fall into this category. The costs of removal may offset the economies gained through the utilization of cheaper storage facilities. If records will be used for a long time, however, it may be advisable to move them to cheaper storage facilities. Many records relate to long-term transactions or obligations of Government agencies. Records pertaining to loan, insurance, and other financial transactions, to regulatory, control, and legal transactions, and to an individual's service status in the Government or in the armed forces, and certain types of fiscal records fall into this category.

The character of the uses made of records should also be considered. Many records have no usefulness for regular current operations but must be held for long and frequently indeterminable periods. Among such records are those pertaining to terminated agencies or programs, which must be held for liquidation purposes; those pertaining to controversial programs, which must be held for pending or probable congressional or other investigations; and those collected in current operations that must be held for purposes of statistical analysis.

The **time of their removal to storage** will depend upon the degree of their currency, that is, upon the nature and the frequency of their use. After records have served their primary administrative uses, the immediate purposes for which they were created and preserved, their removal from office space and equipment may be advisable.

Their **ultimate disposition** will depend upon their value. If records have exclusively administrative, legal, or fiscal values, and no other values, they should

be held in an intermediate depository until they can be destroyed. If they consist of both valuable and valueless materials, they should be held until they can be screened or microfilmed. If a relatively few permanently valuable records are interfiled with larger quantities of records of temporary value, the records should be screened of routine materials before their transfer to the archival agency.

Interagency transfers

Executive Order 9784, dated September 25, 1946, provides "for the more efficient use and for the transfer or other disposition of Government records." The provisions of this order pertaining to interagency transfers read as follows:

2. No records shall be transferred by one agency to the custody of another agency without the approval of the Director of the Bureau of the Budget except for their retirement to the National Archives, as a temporary loan for official use, or as may be otherwise required by statute or Executive order. Any records in the custody of any agency which, in the judgment of the Director of the Bureau of the Budget, are not needed in the conduct of its current business and are needed in the current business of another agency shall be transferred to the latter agency if, in the opinion of the Director, the public interest will be best served by such transfer, provided that any portion of such records deemed to have enduring value may be accessioned by the National Archives and placed on loan to the agency to which the records are physically transferred. In making determinations concerning the transfer of records the Director shall give due regard to the importance of having Government records which are not confidential made generally available to Government agencies and to the public.

5. No transfer of records (except in connection with a termination or transfer of functions) shall be made hereunder when the head of the agency having custody of the records shall certify that such records contain confidential information, a disclosure of which would endanger the national interest or the lives of individuals. Whenever any records are transferred which contain information procured under conditions restricting its use, the use of such records shall continue to be limited by such conditions. The provisions of this order shall not be deemed to require the transfer or other disposition of records or authorize access to records in contravention of law or of regulations of the National Archives Council.

Under paragraph 2 of the Executive order, cited above, the Archivist of the United States determines if the records, or any portion thereof, involved in a proposed interagency transfer have "enduring value," and, if he so determines, the records may be accessioned by the National Archives and placed on loan to the agency having need of them. This determination is made at the time an application for an interagency transfer of records is referred to the Archivist by the Director of the Bureau of the Budget.

Chapter 6

HOW SHOULD RECORDS BE MICROPHOTOGRAPHED?

Objectives

One of the alternative methods of preserving records, it has been noted in preceding chapters, is to reduce them to film form instead of retaining them in their original form. Microphotography is the technique of making photographic copies that are too small to be read without magnification. When a microphotographic copy of a record is consulted, a microfilm reader is usually used to magnify to readable proportions the image of the record on a viewing screen. Microphotography is also used as a step in the reproduction of records in paper form because the rate of camera operation and subsequent enlargement by continuous photographic printers is under some circumstances faster than other reproduction methods.

The objectives in microfilming records are usually two-fold:

1. *To reduce the bulk of materials, and*
2. *To insure permanency to materials.*

Microphotography offers a means of reducing the bulk of records in the same geometric ratio in which their quantity has increased as a result of an extension of governmental activities and of the use of modern duplicating devices. It makes permanency possible for paper that is shortlived. If judiciously applied, microphotography can materially contribute to the solution of an agency's records problems, for it is a modern technique suited to the management of modern records.

Council regulations

Since this manual is concerned primarily with the disposition of records, its discussion of microphotography is confined to a consideration of the regulations of the National Archives Council. The technical processes involved in microphotography require more extensive treatment than can be given here.

Under section 2 of the Records Disposal Act, the National Archives Council is authorized to promulgate regulations establishing the "standards for the reproduction of records by photographic or micro-

photographic processes with a view to the disposal of the original records." These regulations, the act states, "when approved by the President, shall be binding on all agencies of the United States Government." In pursuance of this section the Council adopted regulations on July 29, 1949, that read in part as follows:

Whenever . . . lists or schedules include requests for authority to dispose of permanently valuable records for the reason that when photographed or microphotographed the photographic or microphotographic copies will be adequate substitutes therefor, they shall be accompanied by a statement of procedures to be followed in preserving the integrity of the original records. . . .

Whenever authority is requested to destroy records that as a consequence of photographic or microphotographic reproduction do not have sufficient value to warrant their further preservation, the following standards shall be maintained:

(a) The integrity of the original records shall be preserved on the photographic or microphotographic copies. The preservation of the integrity of the records implies that the photographic or microphotographic copies will be adequate substitutes for the original records in that they will serve the purposes for which such records were created or maintained. Specifically, the term "integrity of the records" is defined to mean

- (1) that the photographic or microphotographic copies will be so arranged, identified, and indexed that an individual document or component of a records series can be located with reasonable facility, and
- (2) that the photographic or microphotographic copies will contain all significant record detail needed for probable future reference.

(b) The film stock used, and the processing thereof, shall comply with the specifications of the National Bureau of Standards for permanent records.

(c) The provisions for preserving, examining, and using the photographic or microphotographic copies of the original records shall be adequate.

(d) Whenever the agency deems that the original photographic or microphotographic negative of permanently valuable records is deteriorating or will deteriorate as a result of use or other causes, the agency shall deposit the original photographic or microphotographic negative with the National Archives, retaining for its own use a service print if desired.

The National Archives Council regulations, cited above, define the standards that should be maintained in photographic or microphotographic reproduction. These standards relate to

1. The preservation of the integrity of the original records on film,
2. The quality of the film stock and its processing,
3. The provisions for preserving, examining, and using the film produced, and
4. The preservation of film containing permanently valuable records.

PRESERVATION OF THE INTEGRITY OF RECORDS.

Although the term "integrity of the original records" is defined in some detail in the Council regulations, a clarification of certain elements of the definition is desirable.

The **findability** of individual documents or components of a file is one of these elements. The ease with which particular items can be located on a film roll depends upon the character of the records and their arrangement. Documents on a film roll can be consulted only one at a time and cannot be readily subjected to comparison, for references cannot be made to various documents simultaneously. An individual document on a film roll can be easily used if it is an integral unit in the sense that it is intelligible without reference to other units, or if it is organized under an intelligible and usable system of arrangement. Thus census schedules, each of which contains complete information on a given person, business, or the like, are integral units that can be readily located and consulted. Similarly documents in a simple alphabetical, chronological, or numerical arrangement can be found readily under a letter of the alphabet, by date, or by number. Generally speaking, a group of records that is divided into a single primary file arrangement, uncomplicated by secondary and tertiary subdivisions, can be copied on film without making their use difficult.

When documents cannot be used individually because of their character and their arrangement, editing and indexing are necessary to show their content and the organizational relationships on film. The phrase, "located with reasonable facility," is included in the definition of "integrity of the original records" to provide sufficient flexibility to meet practical considerations that must be taken into account in any microfilming project. The amount of indexing and identification required to provide for location "with reasonable facility" varies according to the character and arrangement of each group of records. If the records are arranged in a self-indexing pattern, each film roll, as a minimum, should be identified by

1. A title target that should give the name of the office originating or having custody of the rec-

ords, a brief title of the records series, the first and last dates included in the records series, and the file arrangement, if not otherwise obvious,

2. A reel number target in characters that can be read without magnification, and
3. Space targets to separate file units or to indicate the beginning of minor file subdivisions.

If the records are not arranged in a self-indexing pattern, additional targets should be provided. (For information on various types of targets, War Department Technical Manual 12-257, *Microfilming of Records*, pages 25-35, may be consulted.)

The cartons in which the film rolls are placed should also be adequately identified. The identification should include the reel number, the name of the office, the title of the records series, and the names of the file units at the start of the reel, at space targets, and at the end of the reel.

The **legibility** of the film is another element to be considered. In the definition of "integrity of the original records," it is provided that the microphotographs should contain "all significant record detail needed for probable future reference." This phrase again allows latitude in the interpretation of the standards of microphotographic reproduction. Entries on a microphotograph need not be legible if they do not contain "significant record detail." Legibility is essential only for those entries for which the record is being retained.

QUALITY OF FILM STOCK AND ITS PROCESSING.

The film stock used and the processing thereof should comply with the specifications of the National Bureau of Standards for permanent records. The films should be as suitable for permanent records as the best paper records.

PRESERVING, EXAMINING, AND USING THE FILM.

Provision for such matters must be adequate if the film is to take the place of the original records. (See War Department Technical Manual 12-257, *Microfilming of Records*, pages 49-51, for details.)

SECURITY COPY. Provision for the preservation of a security copy of film should be made if the records contained on the film are deemed by the agency to be of permanent value.

Responsibilities

The regulations of the National Archives Council establish standards for microphotographic reproduction, it should be noted, when this reproduction is done *with a view to the disposal of the original records*. An agency should therefore submit a request for authority to dispose of the original records to the Archivist of the United States on Standard Form 115. In executing this form, the agency representative should certify that

the records will have ceased to have sufficient value to war-

rant retention in their original form by virtue of the fact that the microphotographic copies, made in accordance with standards of the National Archives Council, will be adequate substitutes for the original records.

The Archivist of the United States will approve the disposal of the original records on condition of their being photographed or microphotographed in accordance with the regulations of the National Archives Council. The Archivist's approval for disposal is thus contingent upon the maintenance of the standards established by the Council.

Responsibility for adhering to the standards is placed at the point where it can best be discharged, namely in the Government agency where the photographic reproduction is being done. The agency must certify that the photographic copies will be adequate substitutes for the original records. To make this certification, the agency must adhere to the standards that are designed to accomplish this purpose. To insure that the microphotographs can be located with reasonable facility, the agency must devise adequate procedures for arranging, identifying, and indexing the documents on film. To insure that the microphotographs will contain all significant record detail needed for probable future reference, the agency must inspect the documents on film to see that they are properly reproduced. If the agency has no facilities for inspection, it may avail itself of the inspection service rendered by the National Archives' photographic laboratory. Ordinarily, however, the submission of film samples to the National Archives is not required. To insure that the microphotographs will

have the quality of permanency, the agency must obtain film stock and provide for the processing thereof in a manner that will meet the specifications of the National Bureau of Standards for permanent records. It may submit film samples to the Bureau of Standards to have residual hypo or other tests made. To insure that the microphotographs will be preserved and will be available for examination and use, the agency must make certain provisions for their maintenance and servicing.

The responsibilities of the National Archives are limited to the records that are its particular concern, namely the records of permanent value that are being photographed or microphotographed. If the microphotographed records are permanently valuable, the request for authority to dispose of them "shall be accompanied by a statement of procedures to be followed in preserving the integrity of the original records." These procedures relate to arranging, identifying, and indexing records on film. They will be reviewed by the National Archives when it receives a request for authority to dispose of the original records. If the procedures satisfy the National Archives, the request for authority to dispose of the original records will be approved. If the microphotographic copy of permanently valuable records is deteriorating or will deteriorate as a result of use or other causes, the agency should deposit the original photographic or microphotographic negative with the National Archives, retaining for its own use a service print if desired.

Chapter 7

HOW SHOULD RECORDS BE DISPOSED OF?

The disposal of records, it has been noted, is the negative aspect of the problem of records disposition. It is not a negative activity, however, in the sense that no positive results are achieved from it. The expeditious and systematic disposal of useless records is of utmost importance to the economical and efficient management of current records. It is important even to the preservation of permanently valuable records, for only by the elimination of the useless and the ephemeral can the ever-increasing accumulations of Government records be brought under control for research and other uses.

The disposal of useless records, therefore, should be planned as carefully as the retention of permanently valuable records is planned. In carrying out a program for the disposal of records, the following steps are necessary:

Step 1. Evaluate the record accumulations of the agency.

This evaluation should be made when the agency's records are analyzed in the manner suggested in chapter 4 of this manual. The analysis should have two immediate results:

1. *Of the records that have already accumulated, it should identify the ones that are unessential to an agency's operations and have no enduring value.*
2. *Of the records that have already accumulated and that will continue to accumulate, it should identify the ones that will become unessential to an agency's operations after a specified period of time or on the occurrence of specified events and that have no enduring value.*

Step 2. Obtain authorizations to dispose of valueless records.

The procedures and policy of the United States Government with respect to the disposal of records are stated in the Records Disposal Act of July 7, 1943, as amended July 6, 1945 (57 Stat. 380; 59 Stat. 434), and in the regulations of the National Archives Council issued pursuant thereto on July 29, 1949.

It should be noted at the outset that no authorization is required to dispose of "nonrecord materials." Under section 1 of the act a distinction is made be-

tween "records" and "nonrecord materials." This distinction has been discussed in detail in chapter 2 of this manual. In excluding certain types of material from the definition of the word "records," the Records Disposal Act gives agencies discretion to destroy at their own convenience considerable bodies of material without obtaining prior authorization from Congress. Nonrecord materials may thus be disposed of without following the regular procedures for obtaining disposal authorizations. It is the responsibility of each agency to determine whether certain of its papers are records or nonrecord materials. This must be done carefully. Whenever doubt arises as to whether certain papers are nonrecord materials, it should be presumed that they are records. A presumption in favor of the nonrecord character of the materials would be diametrically opposed to the intent of the Records Disposal Act and to all other policies regarding Government records.

It should be noted further that the procedures prescribed in the act are *exclusive* and that no records of the United States Government should be alienated or destroyed except in accordance with the provisions of the act.

TYPES OF AUTHORIZATIONS. Authorizations to dispose of records fall into three types:

1. Authorizations that must be obtained by the agency,
2. Authorizations that are obtained by the National Archives, and
3. Emergency authorizations.

Authorizations that must be obtained by the agency are provided for in section 3 of the Records Disposal Act. They consist of two types:

Disposal lists, which consist of itemized identifications of records in the custody of an agency that are proposed for disposal because they are not needed by it in the transaction of its current business and they do not appear to have sufficient value to warrant their further preservation by the Government. Disposal lists provide authorization to dispose immediately of records that have already accumulated and will not accumulate in the future—*records that will not be recurrent.*

Disposal schedules, which consist of itemized identifications of records of a specified form or character that either have accumulated in the custody of an agency or that may accumulate at any time after the submission of such a schedule and that (a) are proposed for disposal after the lapse of specified periods of time or on the occurrence of specified events because they will not then have sufficient value to warrant their further preservation by the Government or (b) do not have sufficient value to warrant retention in their original form because microphotographic copies, made in accordance with the standards established in regulations of the National Archives Council, are adequate substitutes for the original records.

It should be emphasized that schedules are key instruments in a continuing program for disposing of records of an agency or a subdivision of an agency. A schedule, therefore, should be prepared carefully, so that it will provide a practicable and workable method of eliminating records. The test of the effectiveness of a schedule is whether the records covered by it can actually be removed and disposed of at the end of the retention period. Every step in preparing the schedule should be taken with the purpose of facilitating this final operation. Detailed instructions for preparing the forms used for disposal lists and disposal schedules will be found in the last part of this chapter.

Authorizations that are obtained by the National Archives are of two types:

General schedules, which consist of itemized identifications of records of a specified form or character common to several or all Government agencies that either have accumulated or may accumulate in such agencies and that are proposed for disposal after the lapse of specified periods of time or on the occurrence of specified events because they apparently will not then have sufficient value to warrant their further preservation by the Government. Authority for the issuance of general schedules is provided in the second paragraph of section 4 of the act, which was added by an amendment approved July 6, 1945. The authorizations contained in general schedules are effective immediately and should be utilized whenever possible. It should be noted, however, that the retention periods established under the general schedules have been fixed by the National Archives in the light of its past experience as to the reasonable life expectancy of such records. If the experience of a holding agency indicates that the periods are not long enough, it may retain the records as long as it needs them. On the other hand, if an agency believes that the recommended retention periods should be shortened, it is its privilege to make such recommendations on separate schedules, which, if approved, will supersede the authorization in the general schedule. The authoriza-

tion in the general schedules is thus permissive and not mandatory.

To date six of these general schedules have been issued covering the following types of records:

- No. 1. Personnel records,
- No. 2. Deferment records,
- No. 3. Records of information services and relations with the public,
- No. 4. Mail and postal records,
- No. 5. Fiscal and accounting records, and
- No. 6. Bankruptcy records of United States courts of bankruptcy.

It is expected that additional general schedules will be issued from time to time covering other types of records in common use. Records officers will be furnished copies as they are issued.

Disposal tables, which consist of itemized identifications of records, compiled and issued by the Archivist of the United States, that have previously been approved for disposal by Congress. Authority for the issuance of tables is provided for in section 8 of the act. A table may cover recurrent and/or nonrecurrent material.

Emergency authorizations are of two types:

Under section 10 of the act, authorization is granted to dispose of records without following the regular procedures "whenever the Archivist and the head of the agency that has custody of them shall jointly determine that any records in the custody of any agency of the United States Government are a continuing menace to human health or life or to property." In such a case the head of the agency or his authorized representative should notify the Archivist in writing that he has determined that the records constitute a menace. If the Archivist concurs in this determination, he will direct the immediate removal of the menace by destruction of the records or by other appropriate means. After records found to be a menace have been disposed of, the Archivist should be notified in writing of the time and manner of disposal.

Under section 11 of the act, authorization is granted to dispose of records outside the territorial limits of the continental United States without following the regular procedures whenever, "during the existence of a state of war between the United States and any other nation or when hostile action by a foreign power appears imminent," the head of the agency that has custody of them determines that their retention "would be prejudicial to the interests of the United States" or that they "occupy space urgently needed for military purposes and are . . . without sufficient administrative, legal, research, or other value to warrant their continued preservation." In such a case the official who directed the disposal of the records should submit a written report thereon to the Archivist

describing the character of such records and stating when and where the disposal was accomplished.

TYPES OF CLEARANCES. The following three types of clearances are implicit in and in some instances are specifically required by the Records Disposal Act:

1. Agency clearances,
2. Archival clearance, and
3. Congressional clearance.

Agency clearances of several types are required:

In submitting lists or schedules of records proposed for disposal, the agency indicates that (a) such records are not needed by it in the transaction of current business, and (b) they do not appear to have sufficient administrative, legal, research, or other value to warrant their further preservation by the Government. Agency officials are responsible for determining the value of records for current or future operations of their agency. They should make their determinations carefully and after consulting officials who use the records in current operations.

In submitting lists or schedules of records proposed for disposal, the agency is responsible under section 9 of the Records Disposal Act for determining that no accounting records are disposed of which come within the purview of that section, which provides:

Records pertaining to claims and demands by the Government of the United States or against it, or to any accounts in which the Government of the United States is concerned, either as debtor or creditor, shall not be disposed of by the head of any agency under any authorizations granted pursuant to the provisions of sections 6, 7, and 8 of this Act, until such claims, demands, and accounts have been settled and adjusted in the General Accounting Office, except upon the written approval of the Comptroller General of the United States.

It should be noted that under this provision the authorizations contained in general schedules issued by the Archivist do not relieve an individual agency from responsibility for obtaining the approval of the Comptroller General of the United States to dispose of records pertaining to claims and demands by or against the Government or to any accounts in which the Government is concerned. If an agency prepares lists or schedules covering records pertaining to unsettled and unadjusted accounts, the written approval of the Comptroller General should be obtained concurrently with the submission of the lists or schedules.

In submitting lists or schedules of records of which microphotographs have been or will be made, the agency certifies that such records have been or will be reproduced in accordance with the regulations of the National Archives Council and, as a consequence thereof, do not appear to have sufficient value to warrant their further preservation by the Government. Agency officials, therefore, are responsible for adhering to the standards for the reproduction of records by

photographic or microphotographic processes established by regulations of the National Archives Council, as described in chapter 6 of this manual.

Archival clearance of all lists and schedules is required. When a list or schedule has been completed and all necessary approvals within the agency have been obtained, it should be submitted to the National Archives in accordance with section 3 of the Records Disposal Act. The records described in each item on the list or schedule are then appraised within the National Archives. In its appraisals the National Archives will recommend either the approval or disapproval of the disposal of each of the items on the list or schedule. If, in the course of appraisal by the National Archives, it appears that certain items cannot be reported to Congress without revision, an opportunity is usually given the agency informally to amend them. Such amendments and any amendments the agency wishes to make on its own initiative can be effected by having the official who signed the list or schedule initial the necessary changes or by submitting a letter to the National Archives before the list or schedule is transmitted to Congress specifying the changes desired and enclosing revised pages if the changes are substantial. Items may be withdrawn by the agency from a list or schedule at any time before its submission to Congress.

Congressional clearance of all lists and schedules is required. After the appraisal has been completed by the National Archives, the list or schedule with an accompanying appraisal report is transmitted by the Archivist to Congress, where it is referred to the Joint Committee on the Disposition of Executive Papers. This committee makes a report of its examination of and recommendations on the lists and schedules to the Senate and the House of Representatives. If favorable, this report constitutes the disposal authorization.

Step 3. Utilize the disposal authorizations that are obtained.

The preparation and the submission of disposal lists and schedules accomplish little unless the records covered are promptly removed and disposed of. Consideration should therefore be given to two problems:

1. The application of lists and schedules, and
2. The methods of disposal.

APPLICATION OF LISTS AND SCHEDULES. Lists and schedules do not apply themselves, and to see that they are put fully into effect will require a constant and diligent follow-up on the part of the records officer. It should be noted that except for general schedules initiated by the Archivist the law makes mandatory the disposal of records covered by approved lists and schedules.

Applying lists. Lists are less difficult to apply than schedules. Since they relate only to bodies of records already in existence and ready for disposal and since

their purpose has been accomplished once those particular bodies are disposed of, lists do not present a problem of *continuing* application. Approved disposal lists covering records of headquarters offices are best put into effect by the records officer himself or a member of his staff, who should visit the offices having custody of the listed records to see that the records are removed from the files and disposed of. The problem is less simple when the list covers records of field offices. The best device in such a case is to send to each field office instructions to dispose of the records covered and to require it to report promptly when that has been done. It is seldom advisable to duplicate the list itself and send it out in lieu of instructions.

Applying disposal schedules. The problem involved in putting disposal schedules into effect is not so much one of seeing to the destruction of those records that are ready for disposal when the schedule is approved as it is one of seeing thereafter to the regular disposal of affected records as they attain the age specified in the schedule.

The retention period specified in a disposal schedule will often be considerably longer than the period the records will be in active use, because certain records have to be kept for a time after they have become noncurrent for possible reference in connection with claims, investigations, and the like. For example, an agency's copies of pay rolls may not be used in the payroll office for more than 6 months after they are prepared, but it may be necessary for the agency to keep them for another 2 or 3 years for possible use in replying to exceptions taken to accounts. It is highly desirable in such cases to transfer the records as soon as they have become noncurrent to a records depository.

Many records can be scheduled for disposal as soon as their immediate administrative use has ended, however, and to route such records through an intermediate depository before disposing of them involves a needless expense. But to insure their prompt disposal in the offices in which they are kept the records officer must maintain a close control over the records in all offices and file rooms. Two devices have proved effective for this purpose. One is for the records officer to maintain a tickler file with a card for each item on an approved schedule. Working from this file he can send reminders quarterly or annually to each office that has the custody of records ready for disposal, indicating the records that should be removed from the files and destroyed and asking for a report of the action taken and the quantity of records involved. The other device is to have all requests for space or filing equipment for the storage of records clear through the records officer before administrative action is taken on them. The records officer can then determine to what extent the space and equipment needed could be provided by the prompt disposal of

scheduled records and can recommend disapproval of the request if schedules have not been fully applied. This is a very effective instrument of control and often makes possible important economies.

Requiring reports. It will be found very helpful to require regular reports on the quantity of records disposed of and the amount of space and equipment thereby freed. Such reports are essential not only to assure the application of disposal lists and schedules but to ascertain the savings that have been effected by the disposal program.

METHODS OF DISPOSAL. Under the provisions of section 2 of the Records Disposal Act, the National Archives Council is required to issue regulations governing, among other things, the actual methods by which records authorized for disposal are to be disposed of. Regulations of the Council adopted July 29, 1949, authorize the following three methods only:

Selling as waste paper. The normal method of disposing of records is to sell them as waste paper. If it is employed, however, the records must first be macerated or otherwise treated to destroy their record content or the contract for their sale must include a clause prohibiting their resale as records or documents. Maceration or some other such treatment is advisable in the case of confidential records. Section 14 of the Records Disposal Act provides that "all moneys derived by agencies of the Government from the sale of records authorized for disposal under the provisions of this Act shall be paid into the Treasury of the United States unless otherwise required by existing law applicable to the agency."

Destroying by burning or otherwise. If the records cannot be sold to advantage or if the agency believes it necessary in order to prevent the disclosure of information prejudicial to the interests of the United States or of individuals, they may be destroyed by burning or otherwise.

Transferring to non-Government agencies. The records may be transferred, with the approval of the Archivist of the United States and without cost to the United States Government, to any government, organization, institution, corporation, or person that has made application for them. The decision as to whether the records are to be transferred to an applicant is made by the agency that has custody of them, but they cannot be transferred without the approval of the Archivist. This method of disposal is desirable in rare cases, chiefly for field records that have substantial State or local interest but that have been authorized for disposal because the information in them is duplicated in headquarters files. It should not, of course, be employed for records containing confidential information.

Requests for the Archivist's approval of the transfer of records may come either from the agency to which

application for the transfer has been made or directly from the applicant. If the agency requests approval, it is not necessary for it to transmit the original application or a copy of it, providing the request for approval contains all the information necessary for the Archivist to make his decision. Applications received directly from the applicant are considered as requests for the Archivist's approval, and in the letter transmitting such applications to the agency concerned the Archivist's approval or disapproval of the transfer will be given.

The Archivist will not approve transfers of records that contain information the revelation of which is prohibited by law or would be contrary to the public interest. Nor will he approve transfers to a foreign government unless it has a legitimate interest in the records, nor to a private individual or business corporation unless the records are necessary to the operation of properties transferred by the Government to the individual or corporation. Otherwise the Archivist will normally approve the transfer of records that have been authorized for disposal.

INSTRUCTIONS ON THE USE OF DISPOSAL FORMS

Under section 2 of the Records Disposal Act the National Archives Council is required, among other things, to promulgate regulations which establish the procedures for the compiling and submitting to the Archivist of the United States of lists and schedules of records proposed for disposal. In pursuance of this provision the Council adopted regulations on July 29, 1949, reading in part as follows:

Whenever lists or schedules are submitted to the Archivist of the United States in compliance with provisions of Sec. 3 of the above-mentioned Act, they shall be submitted on Standard Forms, to be promulgated by the National Archives, and in accordance with instructions on the use of such forms issued by the Archivist. The said lists or schedules shall be accompanied by samples of the several items proposed therein for disposal unless samples of such items have been submitted with lists and schedules previously submitted to the Archivist and unless the Archivist shall have waived this requirement.

Two Standard Forms are available for use in requesting authority to dispose of records. The use of these forms is mandatory. Supplies of them can be obtained from the Government Printing Office and should be stocked by each Government department or independent establishment that has extensive record accumulations. The forms made available are (1) Standard Form 115 entitled "Request for Authority to Dispose of Records," and (2) Standard Form 115a entitled "Continuation Sheet for Disposal Request." Standard Form 115 replaces National Archives Forms 8, 9, 10, 40, 108, and 109. Standard Form 115a replaces National Archives Form 100. Standard Form 115 is reproduced on the opposite page.

General instructions

Standard Form 115 entitled "Request for Authority to Dispose of Records," should be prepared in at least five copies. The first four copies should be submitted to the National Archives, and the additional copy or copies should be retained by the agency. The first copy will be kept by the National Archives as a record of the disposal transaction. The second copy

will be sent to the Senate. The third copy will be sent to the House of Representatives. The fourth copy will be returned to the agency after Congressional authorization has been obtained. This copy will serve as a notification to the agency of the Congressional authorization, and it will thus replace National Archives Form 70 and the photostat that hitherto served this purpose. This notification will be made in the box in the upper right-hand corner of the form.

Standard Form 115a entitled "Continuation Sheet for Disposal Request," should be used when more than one page is required to itemize and identify the records on which disposal authorization is requested. The continuation sheet should also be submitted in four copies to the National Archives. Continuation sheets should be numbered consecutively in the upper right-hand corner of the form.

Specific instructions on each entry

ENTRIES 1, 2, and 3. These entries are intended to show what agency's records are identified on the form. *Entry 1* should contain the name of the department or independent agency that is submitting the form. *Entry 2* should show the major subdivision involved. This will be the largest organizational unit within the agency, such as an office, a bureau, or an administration. *Entry 3* should show the minor subdivision, such as a division or a branch. If the records of all offices of a given class are involved, the class of subdivisions may be entered on this line. If the records of field offices are involved, the field offices or office may be entered. Records of all offices of a given class, whether in the field or in Washington, may be covered in a single disposal job if the activities or functions to which they relate are similar in character.

Examples of entry 2 (major subdivision) and entry 3 (minor subdivision) follow:

- (a) Adjutant General's Office
Administrative Services Division
- (b) Census Bureau
Foreign Trades Division

- (c) Production and Marketing Administration
Marketing Facilities Branch
- (d) Food and Drug Administration
Field Inspection Service
- (e) Soil Conservation Service
All Regional Offices
- (f) Farmers Home Administration
All State Directors Offices

If not all items identified on a given form apply to records of the same office or class of offices, center headings should be inserted under entry 8 to indicate the offices. For example, entry 1 might read: "Department of the Interior," and entry 2: "Geological Survey." Above the first body of records itemized on the form might be the center heading, "Office of the Director," which would indicate that the items that follow relate to records of that office only. Below that group of itemized records, a second center heading, "Geologic Branch," would introduce the next group and indicate its applicability.

ENTRIES 4 and 5. These entries are intended to identify and to help locate the person to *whom* inquiries regarding the records should be directed. *Entry 4* should give the name of the person in the department or independent agency with whom a representative of the National Archives may confer about the records. *Entry 5* should give the telephone extension number of this person.

ENTRY 6. This entry is intended to show what kind of authorization is requested. *Only one kind of authorization should be requested on any given form.* The following kinds of authorizations may be requested:

1. To dispose immediately of records that have already accumulated. In this case box A should be marked with an "X," and the completed form is a list as distinguished from a schedule.
2. To dispose at some definite future time or periodically at stated intervals, or to dispose on the occurrence of some definite future events, of records that have accumulated or that *will* recur—that *will* accumulate or *continue* to accumulate. In this case box B should be marked with an "X," and the completed form is a schedule.
3. To dispose of records as soon as it has been established that (1) microphotographic copies have been made in accordance with the standards contained in regulations of the National Archives Council and (2) they are adequate substitutes for the paper records. In this case box C should be marked with an "X," and the completed form is a schedule.

The date on which this authorization is requested, the signature of the person authorized to act for the head of the agency in matters pertaining to the disposal of

records, and his title should be entered on the appropriate lines. All four copies submitted to the National Archives should be signed.

ENTRY 7. In the left-hand column the items of records identified on the form should be numbered in sequence.

ENTRY 8. In the body of the form the records proposed for disposal should be properly itemized and clearly identified. Here the question is not "What agency's records?" or "What kind of authorization?" but "*What records?*" In filling in this information carefully note the following points:

Point 1. State in center headings what office's records are involved *if* all records described on the form are not those of the same office.

Point 2. Indicate the type of records involved *if* they are other than textual records, for example, if they are photographic records, sound recordings, or cartographic records.

Point 3. Itemize and identify the bodies of records proposed for disposal. It is very important to identify clearly the records included in the item and to distinguish them from other records, however similar. The identification ought to be so clearly stated that a person who had no part in preparing the form would know from reading it precisely which records are meant. The itemization and identification will vary with each type of records.

a. Paper records. Take the following steps in itemizing and identifying textual records:

(1) *Determine first the unit of records that is to be identified as a single item.* Records that are so closely related that they can be logically and practically treated as a unit for purposes of disposal should be regarded as a single item. The disposability of records, then, determines how they should be itemized. Records may be disposable as separable units because they relate to the same subject or because they result from the same activity or function. Thus all records relating to a subject on which documentation is not to be preserved or all records relating to routine operations of a given class of offices may be grouped as a single item. If records are grouped for descriptive purposes by subject, by activity, or by function, however, each component part of such a grouping should be listed as a single item whenever reasonable doubt exists as to the advisability of disposing of certain of the component parts. Chapter 3 on What Values Do Records Have? will be helpful in determining which records ordinarily will be approved for disposal. If the component parts of a grouping are listed separately, they should be numbered consecutively under entry number and should not be numbered as item 1a, 1b, 1c under a general grouping.

It should be emphasized that records are disposable

as separable units only if all the documents within the units can be destroyed, and only if all of them can be destroyed simultaneously. An item should not cover both documents to be retained and to be destroyed, or documents to be retained for varying periods. It should, therefore, correspond to the way records can be removed for disposal. Very often it will be found that records that should be removed are so intermingled with those that should be preserved that it would be impossible to apply a disposal authorization. When this situation is encountered the records officer's job is to revise the filing system so that records can be effectively removed as they become useless.

(2) *Describe the units of records so accurately that any misunderstanding as to their identity will be avoided.* Their physical types, such as correspondence, forms, reports, or tabulations may be given first, followed by a further breakdown. Correspondence files may be broken down into incoming and outgoing or both, and into reading files or chronological files. Form records may be identified by form number and title with an additional description of the purpose and use of the form if the title is not self-explanatory. If the numbers and titles of forms are subject to frequent change, however, it is desirable to state simply the transaction to which the forms relate. For example, if records are identified only as "Form 34, Requisition for Supplies," and this form is replaced by "Form 29, Request for Office Supplies," the item is no longer applicable. An item describing the records as "Forms used for the requisition of office supplies" would still be applicable. Reports may be identified by their nature (whether statistical or narrative), by their content (whether progress, survey, inspection), or by their frequency (whether daily, monthly, or annual). After the physical type has been identified, further description of the records can be provided in terms of (a) the subject or program to which they pertain, or (b) the activity or function that resulted in their creation. An alternative method of describing records is to identify first the subject, the program, the activity, or the function to which the records relate and then to indicate that they consist of various physical types. However the records are described, it is important that (a) *all types of documents included* in the group of records itemized for disposal be clearly specified and (b) *the types of records excluded* from the group, if reference to such types is made in the description, should also be clearly specified. In specifying the types of records to be included in an itemized group, the use of certain phraseology to give coverage to the descriptive information is permissible under certain circumstances. In describing records relating to routine transactions, for example, the words "related documents or working papers," or "equivalent forms" may be used. The word "miscellaneous" should be avoided whenever possible.

(3) *Provide, if practicable, additional information that will assist in making an appraisal of the records.* Statements justifying the disposal of items are not required but, if supplied, they will greatly facilitate appraisal and therefore expedite action by the National Archives. Information may be supplied on the relationship of the records proposed for disposal to other records that are to be kept. Physical duplication may be indicated by specifying the type of copy proposed for disposal. Content duplication may be indicated by specifying the types of summary records that contain essentially the same information as that contained in the records proposed for disposal. The function served by the records may also be stated, and this information would be helpful in determining if they are essential to the documentation of the function. Information of these types pertaining to a particular item should follow the description of the item and should be indented below it.

Below are examples of items under entry (8); item (b) includes appraisal information:

- (a) Plant inspection reports, re-inspection reports, working forms 6-431, 6-432, and 6-433 used by inspectors in gathering data for plant inspection reports, pertaining to the operations of inspectors under the Facility Security Program. 1942-1944.
- (b) Records pertaining to the Facility Security Program, consisting of (1) plant inspection reports, (2) re-inspection reports, and (3) working forms 6-431, 6-432, and 6-433 used by inspectors in gathering data for plant inspection reports. 1942-1944.
Inspectors operated under provisions of Executive order dated May 19, 1942, which set up a Facility Security Program, giving data on mines production, mines employment, mines facilities guarding against acts of sabotage, fire, explosion, and employees health hazards, and recommendations thereto made by said inspectors.
- (c) Records of the Wage Stabilization Program, consisting of (1) State Wage Board daily reports, (2) wage adjustment applications and notices of approval or denial, (3) wage adjustment recapitulation sheets, and (4) specifically related correspondence, 1943-47, but *excluding* minutes of Wage Stabilization Board meetings, transcripts of hearings on wage adjustments, wage adjustment memoranda of actions, and related policy documents.
- (d) Preference Rating Certificates (Form PD-3A) or equivalent forms, issued by War Production Board or Civilian Production Administration during 1941-1947.
- (e) Records relating to Organizational Maintenance Operations, which consist of operations performed by first and second maintenance echelons and involve preventive maintenance. 6 months. All record copies.
- (f) Records relating to Reconditioning Maintenance Operations, which consist of service maintenance operations performed by third, fourth, and fifth maintenance echelons, and concern the renovation, repair,

b. *Microphotographed records.* Describe the records so accurately that any misunderstanding as to their identity will be avoided. Do not provide additional information on the character of the records that is pertinent to making a disposition recommendation. Instead, provide information on the "procedures to be followed in preserving the integrity of the original records" whenever such records are deemed to be permanently valuable. The adequacy of the procedures, not the value of the original records, is the determining factor in making the disposition recommendation.

c. *Photographic records.* Take the following steps in itemizing and identifying photographic records:

(1) *Determine first the unit of records that is to be identified as a single item.* List as one item all related materials of the same general class, regardless of quantity or number of units, that pertain to a particular project or that constitute a collection, a separable part of a collection, or some other distinguishable unit.

(2) *Describe the units of records as follows:* (a) Identify the production, project, collection, part of a collection, or other unit adequately by description, title, or number, or all three. (b) Indicate the physical form of the materials, that is, whether motion picture films, aerial mapping films, still photographs, or paper prints. (c) Indicate the kind of copy. If motion pictures are involved, for example, indicate whether nitrate or acetate film is used, whether 16 or 35 mm. is used, whether the copies are negatives, master positives, and/or projection prints. If still photographs are involved, for example, indicate whether glass plates or films are used, and whether both a negative and a positive print are available. (d) Indicate the quantity of materials in each item listed, giving the number of reels for motion picture films, the number of rolls for aerial mapping films, and the approximate number of pieces for still photographs or paper prints.

(3) *Provide, if practicable, additional information on the condition of the material or on other factors that justify the disposal of the item.*

d. *Sound recordings.* Take the following steps in itemizing and identifying sound recordings:

(1) *Determine the unit of records to be identified as a single item in the same way as for photographic records.*

(2) *Describe the unit of records as follows:* (a) Identify the production, project, collection, or part of collection by description, title, or number, or all three. (b) Indicate the physical form, that is, whether aluminum disks, etc. (c) Indicate the kind of copy,

that is, whether master or matrix or service copy. (d) Indicate the number of disks.

e. *Cartographic and related records.* Take the following steps in itemizing and identifying cartographic records:

(1) *Determine first the unit of records that is to be identified as a single item.* List as a single item each group of maps, regardless of bulk or number, that constitute a separately organized file or an entire sequence or class of maps selected for disposal from among other maps.

(2) *Describe the unit of records as follows:* (a) If the entire group of maps being listed as an item is identifiable by a number or symbol representing a particular file heading or by inclusive numbers or symbols representing an uninterrupted sequence of file headings, give the number or symbol or inclusive numbers or symbols. Give the title or designation of the group of maps. Give additional descriptive data to indicate the nature of its content. For example, state the origin of the group of maps if they are not the product of the agency, state the use to which they were put in the agency, give the inclusive dates, that is, the date of publication or the date of completion of manuscript maps. (b) For each item state whether the copies are manuscript (hand-drawn) copies; annotated (combined hand-drawn and printed or processed) copies; photo-processed (such as photostat) copies; printed maps; sets or portfolios of maps in a number of sheets; atlases; or relief models, globes, or other special mediums of presentation. (c) Indicate the quantity and size. Indicate the quantity in inches or feet of total volume and/or the approximate number of maps. Indicate whether the maps are flat-filed, in rolls, or in some other form.

Point 4. Enter the inclusive dates or the period of retention for each item. The information to be given will depend upon the kind of authorization requested under entry 6 above.

a. *If box A under entry 6 has been marked with an "X,"* authority is requested to dispose immediately of records that have already been produced between certain dates. These dates should be specified. In the case of textual records or cartographic records, the inclusive dates may be specified in terms of years. In the case of photographic records or sound recordings, the date of production or release of each item should be specified.

b. *If box B under entry 6 has been marked with an "X,"* authority is requested to dispose at some future time of records that are being produced and will continue to be produced. No dates for the records can therefore be given; instead the retention period, that is, the period for which the records are to be retained by the agency from the time they were produced, should be given. When continuing and accumulating

records have reached the age of the retention period, they may be disposed of. The retention period may be variously stated so long as it is stated with definiteness and certainty. It may be expressed in terms of years, months, weeks, or days, for example, "6 years," "2 months." It may also be expressed in terms of future actions or events. A future action or event that is to determine a retention period must be objective and certain. For example, the phrases "One year after audit and rendition of an audit report by the General Accounting Office," and "One year after termination of the Stove Rationing Program" indicate an action and an event that are objective and certain. Such terms as "Until no longer needed" and "Until the records become inactive" are not to be used. A period of time and an event may be stated as alternatives; for example, "Two years or until receipt of an audit report by the General Accounting Office, whichever is earlier."

c. If box C under entry 6 has been marked with an

"X," disposal authority is requested for records that have been or will be microphotographed. The retention period should read: "Until ascertained that microphotographic copies have been made in accordance with National Archives Council regulations and are adequate substitutes for the paper records."

ENTRY 9. Enter an "X" in this column if a sample of textual or cartographic records is transmitted with the form. Samples need not be transmitted of photographic records, sound recordings, or microphotographed records. If a representative sample of records having the same form or character has been transmitted with a previous disposal request, the job number of the transaction may be entered in the column and transmittal of a further sample omitted.

ENTRY 10. Leave this column blank. The National Archives will use this space to indicate if the disposal of the item or items is "approved" or "disapproved," or if an item has been "withdrawn" at the request of the agency.

Before submitting a disposal job to the National Archives, check the form to determine if the following questions have been properly answered:

- ✓ What agency's records are identified on the form?
Entries 1, 2, and 3.
- ✓ With whom shall the Archives representative confer about the records?
Entries 4 and 5.
- ✓ What kind of authorization is requested?
Entry 6.
- ✓ Are all four copies of the form signed?
Entry 6.
- ✓ How are the items of records numbered?
Entry 7.
- ✓ What are the records?
Entry 8.
- ✓ When were the records produced? Or, when is disposal to be made of the records?
Entry 8.
- ✓ What samples of records were submitted for each item? Or, with what job number were such samples previously submitted?
Entry 9.

Appendix I

Selected Bibliography of Manuals Relating to the Disposition of Federal Records

- Department of Agriculture, Office of Plant and Operations. *Disposition of Official Records*. Washington, 1944. 41 p. (O. P. O. Publication No. 1. A revision of the edition of 1941.)
- Department of the Treasury, Office of the Chief Clerk, Records Administration Section. *Retirement and Disposition of Records*. Washington, 1946. Loose-leaf.
- National Military Establishment, Department of the Army. *Records and Reports: Records Administration—Disposition of Records*. Washington, 1949. 286 p. (Special Regulations No. 345-920-1.)
- Tennessee Valley Authority, Property and Supply Department, Office Service Division. *Records Program of the Tennessee Valley Authority*. Knoxville, 1947. 91 p. (A revision of the edition of 1943.)
- Tennessee Valley Authority, Property and Supply Department, Office Service Division. *Scheduling and Disposal of Records*. Knoxville, 1949. 129 p. (A preliminary draft.)
- Veterans Administration. *Records Management: Disposition of Noncurrent Records*. Washington, 1949. 36 p. (V. A. Manual M 3-8.)
- War Department. *Microfilming of Records*. Washington, 1946. 94 p. (Technical Manual 12-257.)
- War Department, Army Air Forces. *Records Administration: Disposition of Records*. Washington, 1946. 69 p. (A. A. F. Manual 80-0-1.)

Appendix II

Laws and Regulations Relating to the Disposition of Federal Records

The National Archives Act, Approved June 19, 1934, as Amended June 22, 1936, and March 3, June 8, and June 25, 1948¹

[48 Stat. 1122; 49 Stat. 1821; 62 Stat. 58, 344, 1026]

An Act to establish a National Archives of the United States Government, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That there is hereby created the Office of Archivist of the United States, the Archivist to be appointed by the President of the United States, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate.

SEC. 2. The salary of the Archivist shall be \$10,000 annually. All persons to be employed in the National Archives Establishment shall be appointed by the Archivist solely with reference to their fitness for their particular duties and without regard to civil-service law; and the Archivist shall make rules and regulations for the government of the National Archives; but any official or employee with salary of \$5,000 or over shall be appointed by the President by and with the advice and consent of the Senate.²

SEC. 3. All archives or records belonging to the Government of the United States (legislative, executive, judicial, and other) shall be under the charge and superintendence of the Archivist to this extent: He shall have full power to inspect personally or by deputy the records of any agency of the United States Government whatsoever and wheresoever located, and shall have the full cooperation of any and all persons in charge of such records in such inspections, and to requisition for transfer to the National Archives Establishment such archives, or records as the National Archives Council, hereafter provided shall approve for such transfer,

¹ Sections 3, 6a, and 8a appear as amended March 3, 1948; section 8 appears as amended June 22, 1936, and June 25, 1948; and section 10 appears as amended June 8, 1948.

² Some of the provisions of this section have been superseded by the following provisions in the Independent Offices Appropriation Act, 1939, approved May 23, 1938 (52 Stat. 421): "Provided further, That six months after the date of approval of this Act, notwithstanding any provisions to the contrary in section 2 of The National Archives Act, approved June 19, 1934, and section 1 of the Federal Register Act, approved July 26, 1935, all persons employed in The National Archives establishment under section 2 of The National Archives Act and section 1 of the Federal Register Act shall be appointed by the Archivist in accordance with the civil-service laws and the Classification Act of 1923, as amended: And provided further, That all persons employed under section 2 of The National Archives Act and section 1 of the Federal Register Act in said establishment six months after the date of approval of this Act, regardless of the method by which they were appointed, who do not have a competitive classified civil-service status shall acquire such a status (1) upon recommendation by the Archivist and certification by him to the Civil Service Commission that such persons have rendered satisfactory service in said establishment for not less than six months and (2) upon passing such suitable non-competitive tests as the Civil Service Commission shall prescribe."

and he shall have authority to make regulations for the arrangement, custody, use, and withdrawal of material deposited in the National Archives Building: *Provided*, That whenever the head of any agency shall specify in writing restrictions on the use or examination of records being considered for transfer from his custody to that of the Archivist that appear to him to be necessary or desirable in the public interest, the Archivist shall impose such restrictions on such of the records as are transferred to his custody; and restrictions so imposed shall not be removed or relaxed by the Archivist without the concurrence in writing of the head of the agency from which the material shall have been transferred unless the existence of that agency shall have been terminated: *And provided further*, That restrictions on the use or examination of records in the custody of the Archivist heretofore imposed and now in force and effect under the terms of section 3 of the National Archives Act, approved June 18, 1934, shall continue in force and effect regardless of the expiration of the tenure of office of the official who imposed them but may be removed or relaxed by the Archivist with the concurrence in writing of the head of the agency from which the material has been transferred or by the Archivist alone if the existence of that agency shall have been terminated.

SEC. 4. The immediate custody and control of the National Archives Building and such other buildings, grounds, and equipment as may from time to time become a part of the National Archives Establishment (except as the same is vested by law in the Director of National Buildings, Parks, and Reservations) and their contents shall be vested in the Archivist of the United States.

SEC. 5. That there is hereby created also a National Historical Publications Commission which shall make plans, estimates, and recommendations for such historical works and collections of sources as seem appropriate for publication and/or otherwise recording at the public expense, said Commission to consist of the Archivist of the United States, who shall be its chairman; the historical adviser of the Department of State; the chief of the historical section of the War Department, General Staff; the superintendent of naval records in the Navy Department; the Chief of the Division of Manuscripts in the Library of Congress; and two members of the American Historical Association appointed by the president thereof from among those persons who are or have been members of the executive council of the said association: *Provided*, That the preparation and publication of annual and special reports on the archives and records of the Government, guides, inventory lists, catalogs, and other instru-

ments facilitating the use of the collections shall have precedence over detailed calendars and textual reproductions. This Commission shall meet at least once a year, and the members shall serve without compensation except repayment of expenses actually incurred in attending meetings of the Commission.

SEC. 6. That there is hereby further created a National Archives Council composed of the Secretaries of each of the executive departments of the Government (or an alternate from each department to be named by the Secretary thereof), the Chairman of the Senate Committee on the Library, the Chairman of the House Committee on the Library, the Librarian of Congress, the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, and the Archivist of the United States. The said Council shall define the classes of material which shall be transferred to the National Archives Building and establish regulations governing such transfer; and shall have power to advise the Archivist in respect to regulations governing the disposition and use of the archives and records transferred to his custody.

SEC. 6a. Whenever any records the use of which is subject to statutory limitations and restrictions are transferred to the custody of the Archivist of the United States, permissive and restrictive statutory provisions with respect to the examination and use of such records applicable to the head of the agency having custody of them or to employees of that agency shall thereafter likewise be applicable to the Archivist of the United States and to the employees of the National Archives Establishment respectively.

SEC. 7. The National Archives may also accept, store, and preserve motion-picture films and sound recordings pertaining to and illustrative of historical activities of the United States, and in connection therewith maintain a projecting room for showing such films and reproducing such sound recordings for historical purposes and study.

SEC. 8. That the National Archives shall have an official seal which will be judicially noticed.

The Archivist of the United States may make or reproduce and furnish authenticated or unauthenticated copies of any of the documentary, photographic or other archives or records in his custody that are not exempt from examination as confidential or protected by subsisting copyright, and may charge therefor a fee sufficient to cover the cost or expenses thereof. All such fees shall be paid into, administered, and expended as a part of the National Archives Trust Fund created by section 5 of the National Archives Trust Fund Board Act. There shall be no charge for the making or authentication of such copies or reproductions furnished to any department or other agency of the Government for official use. When any such copy or reproduction furnished under the terms hereof is authenticated by the official seal

of the National Archives and certified by the Archivist of the United States, or in his name attested by the head of any office or the chief of any division of the National Archives designated by the Archivist with such authority, it shall be admitted in evidence equally with the original from which it was made.

SEC. 8a. Any official of the United States Government who is authorized to make certifications or determinations on the basis of records in his custody is hereby authorized to make certifications or determinations on the basis of records that have been transferred by him or his predecessors to the custody of the Archivist of the United States.

SEC. 9. That the Archivist shall make to Congress, at the beginning of each regular session, a report for the preceding fiscal year as to the National Archives, the said report including a detailed statement of all accessions and of all receipts and expenditures on account of the said establishment. He shall also transmit to Congress the recommendations of the Commission on National Historical Publications, and, on January 1 of each year, with the approval of the Council, a list or description of the papers, documents, and so forth (among the archives and records of the Government), which appear to have no permanent value or historical interest, and which, with the concurrence of the Government agency concerned, and subject to the approval of Congress, shall be destroyed or otherwise effectively disposed of.

SEC. 10. That there are hereby authorized such appropriations as may be necessary for the maintenance of the National Archives Building and the administration of the collections, the expenses, and work of the Commission on National Historical Publications, the supply of necessary equipment and expenses incidental to the operations aforesaid, including transfer of records to the Archives Building, printing and binding; personal services in the District of Columbia and elsewhere; travel and subsistence and per diem in lieu of subsistence, notwithstanding the provisions of any other Acts; stenographic services by contract or otherwise as may be deemed necessary; purchases and exchange of books and maps; payment in advance when authorized by the Archivist for library memberships in societies whose publications are available to members only or to members at a price lower than to the general public; purchase, exchange, and operation of motor vehicles; and all absolutely necessary contingent expenses, all to be expended under the direction of the Archivist, who shall annually submit to Congress estimates therefor in the manner prescribed by law.

SEC. 11. All Acts or parts of Acts relating to the charge and superintendency, custody, preservation, and disposition of official papers and documents of executive departments and other governmental agencies inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed.

Records Disposal Act, Approved July 7, 1943, as Amended July 6, 1945³

[57 Stat. 380-383; 59 Stat. 434]

An Act to provide for the disposal of certain records of the United States Government.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That when used in this Act, the word "records" includes all books, papers, maps, photographs, or other documentary materials,

³ Sections 4, 6, 7, and 12 appear as amended July 6, 1945.

regardless of physical form or characteristics, made or received by any agency of the United States Government in pursuance of Federal law or in connection with the transaction of public business and preserved or appropriate for preservation by that agency or its legitimate successor as evidence of the organization, functions, policies, decisions,

procedures, operations, or other activities of the Government or because of the informational value of data contained therein. Library and museum material made or acquired and preserved solely for reference or exhibition purposes, extra copies of documents preserved only for convenience of reference, and stocks of publications and of processed documents are not included within the definition of the word "records" as used in this Act.

SEC. 2. The National Archives Council shall promulgate regulations, not inconsistent with this Act, establishing (1) procedures for the compiling and submitting to the Archivist of the United States of lists and schedules of records proposed for disposal, (2) procedures for the disposal of records authorized for disposal, and (3) standards for the reproduction of records by photographic or microphotographic processes with a view to the disposal of the original records. Such regulations, when approved by the President, shall be binding on all agencies of the United States Government.

SEC. 3. The head of each agency of the United States Government shall submit to the Archivist of the United States, in accordance with regulations promulgated as provided in section 2 of this Act (1) lists of any records in the custody of the agency that have been photographed or microphotographed in accordance with the said regulations and that, as a consequence thereof, do not appear to have sufficient value to warrant their further preservation by the Government; (2) lists of any other records in the custody of the agency that are not needed by it in the transaction of its current business and that do not appear to have sufficient administrative, legal, research, or other value to warrant their further preservation by the Government; and (3) schedules proposing the disposal after the lapse of specified periods of time of records of a specified form or character that either have accumulated in the custody of the agency or that may accumulate therein at any time after the submission of such schedules and that apparently will not after the lapse of the period specified have sufficient administrative, legal, research, or other value to warrant their further preservation by the Government.

SEC. 4. The Archivist shall submit to Congress, at such times as he shall deem expedient, the lists or schedules submitted to him in accordance with the provisions of section 3 of this Act, or parts of such lists or schedules, and lists or schedules of any records in his legal custody, insofar as it shall appear to him that the records listed in such lists or schedules do not, or will not after the lapse of the period specified, have sufficient administrative, legal, research, or other value to warrant their continued preservation by the United States Government: *Provided*, That the Archivist shall not submit to Congress lists or schedules of records of any existing agency of the Government in his legal custody without first having obtained the written consent of the head of such agency.

The Archivist may also submit to Congress, together with recommendations of the National Archives Council with respect thereto, and at such times as he may deem expedient, schedules proposing the disposal, after the lapse of specified periods of time, of records of a specified form or character common to several or all agencies that either have accumulated or may accumulate in such agencies and that apparently will not, after the lapse of the periods specified, have sufficient administrative, legal, research, or other value to warrant

their further preservation by the United States Government.

SEC. 5. Whenever the Archivist shall submit lists or schedules to Congress, it shall be the duty of the presiding officer of the Senate to appoint two Senators who, with the members of the Committee on the Disposition of Executive Papers of the House of Representatives, shall constitute a joint committee to which all such lists or schedules shall be referred, and the joint committee shall examine such lists or schedules and submit to the Senate and House of Representatives, respectively, a report of such examination and its recommendations.

SEC. 6. If the joint committee reports that any of the records listed in a list or schedule referred to it do not, or will not after the lapse of the period specified, have sufficient administrative, legal, research, or other value to warrant their continued preservation by the Government, the Archivist shall notify the agency or agencies having such records in their custody of the action of the joint committee and such agency or agencies shall cause such records to be disposed of in accordance with regulations promulgated as provided in section 2 of this Act: *Provided*, That authorizations granted pursuant to schedules submitted under the last paragraph of section 4 of this Act shall be permissive and not mandatory.

SEC. 7. If the joint committee fails to make a report during any regular or special session of Congress on any list or schedule submitted to Congress by the Archivist not less than ten days prior to the adjournment of such session, the Archivist may empower the agency or agencies having in their custody records covered by such lists or schedules to cause such records to be disposed of in accordance with regulations promulgated as provided in section 2 of this Act.

SEC. 8. Whenever it shall appear to the Archivist that any agency has in its custody, or is accumulating, records of the same form or character as any records of the same agency previously authorized by Congress to be disposed of, he may empower the head of such agency to dispose of such records, after they have been in existence a specified period of time, in accordance with regulations promulgated as provided in section 2 of this Act and without listing or scheduling them.

SEC. 9. Records pertaining to claims and demands by the Government of the United States or against it, or to any accounts in which the Government of the United States is concerned, either as debtor or creditor, shall not be disposed of by the head of any agency under any authorizations granted pursuant to the provisions of sections 6, 7, and 8 of this Act, until such claims, demands, and accounts have been settled and adjusted in the General Accounting Office, except upon the written approval of the Comptroller General of the United States.

SEC. 10. Whenever the Archivist and the head of the agency that has custody of them shall jointly determine that any records in the custody of any agency of the United States Government are a continuing menace to human health or life or to property, the Archivist shall cause such menace to be eliminated immediately by whatever method he may deem necessary. If any records in the custody of the Archivist are disposed of under this section, the Archivist shall report the disposal thereof to the agency from which they were transferred.

SEC. 11. At any time during the existence of a state of war between the United States and any other nation or when

hostile action by a foreign power appears imminent, the head of any agency of the United States Government may authorize the destruction of any records in his legal custody situated in any military or naval establishment, ship, or other depository outside the territorial limits of continental United States (1) the retention of which would be prejudicial to the interests of the United States or (2) which occupy space urgently needed for military purposes and are, in his opinion, without sufficient administrative, legal, research, or other value to warrant their continued preservation: *Provided*, That within six months after the disposal of any such records, the official who directed the disposal thereof shall submit a written report thereon to the Archivist in which he shall describe the character of such records and state when and where the disposal thereof was accomplished.

SEC. 12. The Archivist shall transmit to Congress at the beginning of each regular session reports as to the records authorized for disposal under the provisions of section 7 of this Act and as to the records disposed of under the provisions of sections 10 and 11 of this Act.

SEC. 13. Photographs or microphotographs of any records made in compliance with regulations promulgated as provided in section 2 of this Act shall have the same force

and effect as the originals thereof would have and shall be treated as originals for the purpose of their admissibility in evidence. Duly certified or authenticated reproductions of such photographs or microphotographs shall be admitted in evidence equally with the original photographs or microphotographs.

SEC. 14. All moneys derived by agencies of the Government from the sale of records authorized for disposal under the provisions of this Act shall be paid into the Treasury of the United States unless otherwise required by existing law applicable to the agency.

SEC. 15. The procedures herein prescribed are exclusive and no records of the United States Government shall be alienated or destroyed except in accordance with the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 16. The Act entitled "An Act to provide for the disposition of certain records of the United States Government", approved August 5, 1939 (53 Stat. 1219), the Act entitled "An Act to provide for the disposition of certain photographed records of the United States Government, and for other purposes", approved September 24, 1940 (54 Stat. 958), and all other Acts or parts of Acts inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed.

Resolution Concerning the Transfer of Records to the National Archives, Adopted by the National Archives Council November 9, 1944

Whereas section 3 of the "Act to establish a National Archives of the United States Government and for other purposes" (48 Stat. 1122) provides that "All archives or records belonging to the Government of the United States (legislative, executive, judicial, and other) shall be under the charge and superintendence of the Archivist to this extent: He shall have full power to inspect personally or by deputy the records of any agency of the United States Government whatsoever and wheresoever located, and shall have the full cooperation of any and all persons in charge of such records in such inspections, and to requisition for transfer to the National Archives Establishment such archives, or records as the National Archives Council, hereafter provided shall approve for such transfer";

And whereas section 6 of said act creates the National Archives Council and authorizes it to "define the classes of material which shall be transferred to the National Archives Building and establish regulations governing such transfer"; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Archivist of the United States be and he is hereby authorized to requisition for transfer to the National Archives any archives or records in the custody of any agency of the United States Government (legislative, executive, judicial, and other), which fall within any of the following classes, viz:

I. Any archives or records that the head of the agency that has the custody of them may offer for transfer to the National Archives.

II. Any archives or records that have been in existence for more than fifty years unless the head of the agency that has

the custody of them certifies in writing to the Archivist that they must be retained in his custody for use in the conduct of the regular current business of the said agency.

III. Any archives or records of any Federal agency that has gone out of existence unless the head of the agency that has the custody of them certifies in writing to the Archivist that they must be retained in his custody for use in performing transferred functions of the discontinued agency or in liquidating its affairs.

IV. Any other archives or records that the National Archives Council by special resolution may authorize to be transferred to the National Archives.

Resolved further, (1) That when the Archivist shall issue his requisition for any archives or records he shall furnish to a duly authorized representative of the agency that has the custody of them an inventory of the material covered by such requisition; (2) That when, and not until, this inventory shall have been certified to by the signatures of the representatives of said agency and of the Archivist, respectively, and the said archives or records shall have been delivered by the representative of the said agency to the representative of the Archivist either at the depository in which they are stored or at a depository under the control of the Archivist, the said archives or records shall pass into the legal custody of the Archivist of the United States; *Provided*, That records of the Federal Government that are not in the legal custody of any other agency of the Government shall be deemed to be in the legal custody of the Archivist and may be transferred by him to a depository under his control without the formalities of issuing a requisition or delivering an inventory.

Regulations of the National Archives Council, Adopted July 29, 1949

Whereas Sec. 2 of "An Act to provide for the disposal of certain records of the United States Government" approved July 7, 1943, as amended by the Act approved July 6, 1945

(57 Stat. 380-383, 59 Stat. 434; 44 U. S. C. 366-380), requires that the National Archives Council promulgate regulations not inconsistent with the provisions of the said

Act, "establishing procedures for the compiling and submitting of lists and schedules of records proposed for disposal, procedures for the disposal of records authorized for disposal, and standards for the reproduction of records by photographic or microphotographic processes with a view to the disposal of the original records," which regulations, "when approved by the President, shall be binding on all agencies of the United States Government"; Therefore be it resolved, that the following regulations be promulgated:

I. Whenever lists or schedules of records are submitted to the Archivist of the United States in compliance with provisions of Sec. 3 of the above-mentioned Act, they shall be submitted on Standard Forms, to be promulgated by the National Archives, and in accordance with instructions on the use of such forms issued by the Archivist. The said lists or schedules shall be accompanied by samples of the several items proposed therein for disposal unless samples of such items have been submitted with lists and schedules previously submitted to the Archivist or unless the Archivist shall have waived this requirement. Whenever said lists or schedules include requests for authority to dispose of permanently valuable records for the reason that when photographed or microphotographed the photographic or microphotographic copies will be adequate substitutes therefor, they shall be accompanied by a statement of procedures to be followed in preserving the integrity of the original records as specified in II (a) hereof.

II. Whenever authority is requested to destroy records that as a consequence of photographic or microphotographic reproduction do not have sufficient value to warrant their further preservation, the following standards shall be maintained:

(a) The integrity of the original records shall be preserved on the photographic or microphotographic copies. The preservation of the integrity of the records implies that the photographic or microphotographic copies will be adequate substitutes for the original records in that they will serve the purposes for which such records were created or maintained. Specifically, the term "integrity of the records" is defined to mean

- (1) that the photographic or microphotographic copies will be so arranged, identified, and indexed that an individual document or component of a records series can be located with reasonable facility, and
- (2) that the photographic or microphotographic copies will contain all significant record detail needed for probable future reference.

(b) The film stock used, and the processing thereof, shall comply with the specifications of the National Bureau of Standards for permanent records.

(c) The provisions for preserving, examining, and using the photographic or microphotographic copies of the original records shall be adequate.

(d) Whenever the agency deems that the original photographic or microphotographic negative of permanently valuable records is deteriorating or will deteriorate as a result of use or other causes, the agency shall deposit the original photographic or microphotographic negative with the National Archives, retaining for its own use a service print if desired.

III. Whenever any records shall have been authorized for disposal in accordance with the provisions of Secs. 6, 7, or 8 of the above-mentioned Act and whenever any records of types that have been proposed for disposal in schedules approved in accordance with the provisions of Sec. 6 of the said Act have been in existence for the periods specified in such schedules, the agency or agencies having the custody of such records shall, subject to the proviso of Sec. 6 and the provisions of Sec. 9 of the said Act, (a) cause the said records to be sold as waste paper: Provided that, unless the said records shall have been treated in such a manner as to destroy their record content, any contract for sale of them shall prohibit their resale as records or documents; (b) cause them to be destroyed, if they cannot advantageously be sold or if, in the opinion of the head of the agency having custody of said records, destruction is necessary to avoid the disclosure of information that might be prejudicial to the interests of the Government or of individuals; or (c) cause them to be transferred, with the approval of the Archivist of the United States and without cost to the United States Government, to any government, organization, institution, corporation, or person that has made application for them.

The above regulations supersede those promulgated by the National Archives Council on August 15, 1945.

I hereby certify that the above regulations were unanimously adopted by the National Archives Council on July 29, 1949.

WAYNE C. GROVER,
Chairman of the Council.

Approved on August 22, 1949:

HARRY S. TRUMAN,

President of the United States.

By direction of the National Archives Council the promulgation of the above regulations is accomplished on August 30, 1949, by transmittal of copies thereof to the heads of all agencies of the United States Government.

THAD PAGE,
Secretary of the Council.

Executive Order 9784, Providing for the More Efficient Use and for the Transfer and Other Disposition of Government Records

By virtue of the authority conferred on me by the Constitution and statutes, in order to provide that Government records may be utilized to maximum advantage and disposed of expeditiously when no longer needed and in the interest of more efficient internal management of the Government, it is hereby ordered as follows:

1. The head of each agency shall establish and maintain

an active continuing program for the effective management and disposition of its records. Agencies shall retain in their custody only those records that are needed in the conduct of their current business, and except as herein otherwise provided, shall promptly cause all other records to be offered for transfer to the National Archives or proposed for other disposition in accordance with law.

2. No records shall be transferred by one agency to the custody of another agency without the approval of the Director of the Bureau of the Budget except for their retirement to the National Archives, as a temporary loan for official use, or as may be otherwise required by statute or Executive order. Any records in the custody of any agency which, in the judgment of the Director of the Bureau of the Budget, are not needed in the conduct of its current business and are needed in the current business of another agency shall be transferred to the latter agency if, in the opinion of the Director, the public interest will be best served by such transfer, provided that any portion of such records deemed to have enduring value may be accessioned by the National Archives and placed on loan to the agency to which the records are physically transferred. In making determinations concerning the transfer of records the Director shall give due regard to the importance of having Government records which are not confidential made generally available to Government agencies and to the public.

3. The Civil Service Commission, with the approval of the Director of the Bureau of the Budget, is authorized to promulgate regulations, not inconsistent with law and regulations of the National Archives Council, requiring and governing the establishment, content, transfer among agencies, and other disposition of personnel records, provided that no agency shall be required to release or transfer confidential material affecting any of its employees.

4. Except as provided in the preceding paragraph 3, the Director of the Bureau of the Budget with the advice and assistance of the National Archives shall conduct such inspections, require such reports, and issue such directives and regulations as he may deem necessary to carry out the provisions of this order.

5. No transfer of records (except in connection with a termination or transfer of functions) shall be made hereunder when the head of the agency having custody of the records shall certify that such records contain confidential information, a disclosure of which would endanger the national interest or the lives of individuals. Whenever any records are transferred which contain information procured under conditions restricting its use, the use of such records shall continue to be limited by such conditions. The provisions of this order shall not be deemed to require the transfer or other disposition of records or authorize access to records in contravention of law or of regulations of the National Archives Council.

6. Definitions.

(a) The term "agency" as used herein shall be deemed to mean any executive department or independent establishment, including any government corporation that is operated as an instrumentality of the Federal Government.

(b) The term "records" as used herein shall apply to all books, papers, maps, photographs, or other documentary materials, regardless of physical form or characteristics, made or received by any agency of the United States Government in pursuance of Federal law or in connection with the transaction of public or organizational business and preserved or appropriate for preservation by that agency as evidence of or because of its informational value in relation to its organization, functions, policies, personnel, operations, decisions, procedures, financial transactions, and all other activities of an administrative, management, or program nature.

HARRY S. TRUMAN.

THE WHITE HOUSE,
September 25, 1946.